

NORWALK

AUGUST 2024

# Living

MAGAZINE

## RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Warren County residents  
share their favorites



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WELCOME

# RESIDENTS choose favorites again

Welcome to our annual compilation of residents' choices in Warren County. We launched this poll to determine the top people, places and events in the area, and the results make for a fun read each year.

We invite residents in the area to vote for their favorites by answering more than 60 questions with open-ended responses. Some other polls rig the results by "suggesting" choices of businesses or requiring them to pay to be on the ballot. That is unethical, in our eyes, as it doesn't give a true snapshot of what the locals really like. Rest assured, these results are 100% organic responses that we received from our online ballot.

We have become quite good at polling our readers and sharing results. I have been gathering this type of information for CITYVIEW magazine for many years, and you are likely familiar with the Best Of Des Moines readers' poll and the certificates you see across central Iowa. That poll was the first of its kind in the metro area, and it continues to be the primary source of central Iowans' favorites. Now we know it not only works for Des Moines, but for Warren County as well.

You will likely agree with many of the results, and you will likely disagree with some, too. Hopefully, you took the time to cast your vote. If not, be sure to do so next year. Look to the pages of this magazine for full details as the time draws nearer.

We published the top three vote-getters in each of the categories inside these pages. Be sure to congratulate all the people, places and events that were selected as winners and let them know how much you appreciate them being in Warren County.

As always, thank you for reading, and thank you for voting, too. ■

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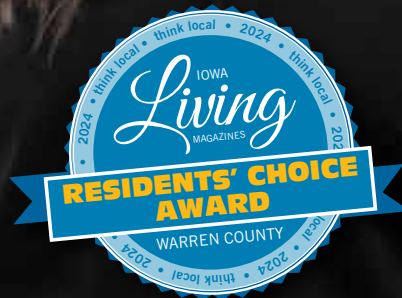
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# RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS



## Warren County residents share their favorites

August has rolled around again, which means it is time to recognize the Residents' Choice Award winners for Warren County.

As we continue to improve our poll and respond to what readers say is important to them, we have added categories. This year, look for favorites you haven't seen before in the categories of Tree Service, Homebuilding/Remodeling Contractor and Exterior Contractor.

Also new this year, note the repeat winners designated by an asterisk by their name. See who is merging as our "perennial favorites." These favorites are doing it right — building loyalty in

their customers.

As always, remember that these favorites were chosen by Warren County residents. You are likely to agree with some choices and disagree with others, but the results were determined by your area neighbors. If you voted in this year's poll, thank you for participating. And, if you didn't, be sure to look for notices in this magazine of next year's poll opening and cast your vote! With some categories having only a few votes between the top vote-getter and the third-place vote-getter, it's important to note that all those listed are winners, and we congratulate them all.

(Runners up in alphabetical order. \* Denotes a repeat winner)

## Restaurant

**\* Winn's Pizza and Steakhouse**

**Runners Up:** Brickhouse Tavern; Crouse Cafe

### Restaurant for Breakfast

**\* Crouse Cafe**

### Runners Up: Maid Rite; Savor the Rise

### Restaurant for Lunch

### Winn's Pizza and Steakhouse

**Runners Up:** Crouse Cafe; Mishmash Eats & Sweets

### Restaurant for Dinner

**\* Winn's Pizza and Steakhouse**

**Runners Up:** Brickhouse Tavern; Z's Eatery & Draught Haus

### Restaurant for Dessert

## Wendy's Ice Cream Shop

### Runners Up: Crouse Cafe; The Outside Scoop

### Place for Ice Cream

**\* Wendy's Ice Cream Shop**

**Runners Up:** DQ Grill & Chill Restaurant;  
The Outside Scoop



## Pizza Establishment

**\* Pete's Pizza**

**Runners Up:** Pyra Pizzeria; Winn's Pizza and Steakhouse

## Bar

## The Zoo

**Runners Up:** 804 Main Bar & Grill; The Hide Out

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# FEATURE

## Coffee Shop

### Scooter's Coffee

**Runners Up:** Savor the Rise; Uncommon Grounds Coffee House

## Brewery/Distillery/Winery

### \* West Hill Brewing Company

**Runners Up:** Iowa Distilling Company; Summerset Winery

## Bakery

### \* Savor the Rise

**Runners Up:** Hy-Vee; Mishmash Eats & Sweets

## Catering Company

### \* Whip It Good Catering

**Runners Up:** Hy-Vee; Mishmash Eats & Sweets

## Server / Bartender

### Hannah Rasmussen - Iowa Distilling Company

**Runners Up:** Heidi Crouse - Crouse Cafe; Jesse Forbes - The Zoo

## Auto Service

### Chumbley's Auto Care

**Runners Up:** Downey Tire Pros; Keller's Garage

## Auto Body Shop

### \* Smith's Collision Center

**Runners Up:** Details Plus Collision Center; Miller Auto Body & Paint



Norwalk Family Dentistry, with Drs. Elizabeth Fleck, Donna Grant and Maureen Winslow, is residents' choice for favorite dental practice once again, having received the honor each year of the poll.

## Car Dealership

### DeYarman Ford Indianola

**Runners Up:** Gregg Young Chevrolet of Norwalk; Southtown Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram

## Auto Parts Store

### \* O'Reilly Auto Parts

**Runners Up:** Carquest Auto Parts - Harvey's Automotive; NAPA Auto Parts

**Thank You Warren County residents!**

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# FEATURE

## Preschool/Daycare

### **Crayons 2 Pencils Early Learning Center**

**Runners Up:** Lil' Hands Big Dreams Child Development and Preschool; Purple & Gold Preschool

## School

### **\* Irving Elementary School**

**Runners Up:** Lakewood Elementary School; Norwalk High School

## Park

### **\* Buxton Park**

**Runners Up:** Lake Ahquabi State Park; Moats Park

## Community Festival or Event

### **\* National Balloon Classic**

**Runners Up:** Norwalk Fourth of July; Warren County Fair

## Church

### **\* Indianola Community Church**

**Runners Up:** Indianola First Assembly of God; St. John The Apostle Catholic Church

## Pastor

### **\* Jon Duey, Indianola Community Church**

**Runners Up:** Barry Hill, Indianola First Church; Dan Kirby, St. John the Apostle Catholic Church

## Chamber of Commerce

### **\* Indianola Chamber of Commerce**

**Runners Up:** Carlisle Chamber of Commerce; Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce

## Grocery Store

### **\* Fareway Meat & Grocery**

**Runners Up:** Hy-Vee; Walmart

## Boutique

### **\* Lula Belle Designs**

**Runners Up:** Little Children's Boutique; Roots

## Retail Store

### **Lula Belle Designs**

**Runners Up:** Roots; Walmart

## Florist

### **\* Bellflower Florist & Gifts, LLC**

**Runners Up:** Busy Bee Garden Center; Hy-Vee Floral

## Home Improvement Retail Store

### **\* Cappel's Ace Hardware Norwalk**

**Runners Up:** Circle B Home Center; McCoy True Value Hardware

## Appliance Store

### **\* Circle B Home Center**

**Runners Up:** Cappel's Ace Hardware Norwalk; Kappelman Appliance

## Liquor Store

### **\* Hy-Vee Wine & Spirits**

**Runners Up:** Fareway Meat & Grocery; Iowa Distilling Company

## Nursery or Garden Center

### **\* Busy Bee Garden Center**

**Runners Up:** Bedwell Gardens; Ted Lare Design + Build & Garden Center

## Place to Purchase a Gift for a Man

### **\* Theisen's Home Farm Auto of Indianola**

**Runners Up:** Cappel's Ace Hardware Norwalk; Lula Belle Designs

## Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman

### **\* Lula Belle Designs**

**Runners Up:** Adorn; Roots

## Dad/Child Date Spot

### **Wendy's Ice Cream Shop**

**Runners Up:** The Corner Sundry; Indianola - Paramount 7

## Mom/Child Date Spot

### **\* The Corner Sundry**

**Runners Up:** Indianola - Paramount 7; Wendy's Ice Cream Shop



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**Favorite Retail Store**  
**Favorite Place to Purchase Gift for a Woman**  
**Runner-Up Favorite Place to Purchase a Gift for a Man**

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# FEATURE

## Place to Take Your Mom and Dad

### \* Crouse Cafe

**Runners Up:** National Balloon Classic; Winn's Pizza & Steakhouse

## Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids

### Warren County Fair

**Runners Up:** Indianola - Paramount 7; Wendy's Ice Cream Shop

## Place for Children's Birthday Parties

### \* Pizza Ranch

**Runners Up:** Crayons 2 Pencils Recreation Center; Indianola Tumbling Center

## Event Venue

### The Cottage

**Runners Up:** The Hive at Busy Bee; The Studio

## Golf Course

### Indianola Country Club

**Runners Up:** Deer Run Golf Club; Shady Oaks Golf Course

## Hair Salon

### \* Copper + Fringe Beauty Co.

**Runners Up:** Pure Salon Aveda; Young & Co. Beauty

## Health Clinic

### \* UnityPoint Clinic Family Medicine

**Runners Up:** MercyOne Family Medicine; The Iowa Clinic

## Dental Office

### \* Norwalk Family Dentistry

**Runners Up:** Dental Professionals; Indianola Family Dentistry

## Orthodontist Office

### \* Central Iowa Orthodontics

**Runners Up:** Johnson Orthodontics; Jones Family Dental

## Mental Health Services

### Wilkins Counseling Services

**Runners Up:** Patti Campidilli; Magnolia Connection

## Chiropractor

### Drees Family & Sports Chiropractic

**Runners Up:** Norwalk Chiropractic; True Roots Chiropractic

## Vision Care

### \* Optometric Associates

**Runners Up:** Elite Eye Care; Indianola Vision Center

## Health Club or Gym

### \* Indianola Wellness Campus

**Runners Up:** Anytime Fitness; CrossFit Undone

## Pharmacy

### \* Medicap Pharmacy

**Runners Up:** Hy-Vee Pharmacy; Walgreens

## Hearing Center

### \* Iowa Hearing Center

**Runners Up:** Miracle-Ear Hearing Aid Center; Woodard Hearing Centers

## Cosmetic Services

### vIVid Life Spa

**Runners Up:** Copper + Fringe Beauty Co.; FFC Beauty

## Physical Therapy

### \* Athletico Physical Therapy

**Runners Up:** 21st Century Rehab; Indianola Physical Therapy

## Dance Studio

### \* The Dance Factory

**Runners Up:** Dance 2 Xtreme; Superstars Performing Arts

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# DEYARMAN



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# FEATURE

## Gymnastics Studio

### \* Indianola Tumbling Center

**Runners Up:** Dance 2 Xtreme; Superstars Performing Arts

## Tumbling Studio

### Dance 2 Xtreme

**Runners Up:** Indianola Tumbling Center; Superstars Performing Arts

## Financial Planner

### \* Seth Lampman

**Runners Up:** Kim Guilford; Chad Stevens

## Law Firm

### \* Ellis Law Offices, P.C.

**Runners Up:** Ouderkirk Law Firm; Stuyvesant, Strong, Krapfl & Carda, PLLC

## Accounting Firm

### \* Accounting Associates of Indianola

**Runners Up:** Gray Financial Solutions, Inc.; Shull, Schrum, McClaflin and Co., Inc.

## Veterinarian

### \* Indianola Veterinary Clinic

**Runners Up:** All Creatures Small Animal Hospital; Norwalk Veterinary Clinic

## Dog Groomer

### \* Amore Pets

**Runners Up:** A Dog's Day Out; Tammy's Tailwaggers

## Pet Care

### \* Amore Pets

**Runners Up:** All Creatures Small Animal Hospital; Indianola Veterinary Clinic

## Lawn Care Business

### \* Warren Lawn Services

**Runners Up:** Central Iowa Outdoor Services Co.; Woosley Landscaping & Mowing

## Landscaping Company

### Central Iowa Outdoor Services Co.

**Runners Up:** Ted Lare Design + Build & Garden Center; Woosley Landscaping & Mowing

## Heating and Cooling Business

### \* Indianola Mechanical

**Runners Up:** Bussanmas Heating & Cooling; Vanderpool Plumbing, Heating, Air Conditioning & Electrical

## Electrician

### \* Miller Electric

**Runners Up:** Burkhead Electric; Integra Electric Solutions

## Plumber

### \* Indianola Mechanical

**Runners Up:** Chew Plumbing Company, LLC; Vanderpool Plumbing, Heating, Air Conditioning & Electrical

## Senior Living Facility

### \* The Village

**Runners Up:** Holland Farms Senior Living; Westview of Indianola Care Center

## Insurance Company

### Gretchen Schrock - Country Financial

**Runners Up:** Chad Kuehl - State Farm Insurance; Lane Insurance Agency

## Realtor

### \* Jon Niemeyer

**Runners Up:** Karey Bishop; Emily Keller-Lampman

## Bank/Credit Union

### \* City State Bank

**Runners Up:** Peoples Savings Bank; TruBank

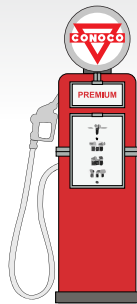
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**Runners Up:** Lena Rita Photography; Tim McConnell Photography

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## FEATURE

### Place for Guests to Stay

#### Hotel Pommier

**Runners Up:** Country Inn and Suites Indianola; The Corn Crib Bed and Breakfast

### Pest Control

#### Perfection Pest Management

**Runners Up:** Davidson Pest Control; Rhoades Pest Control

### Tree Service

#### Crouse Tree Service

**Runners Up:** 515 Tree Service; Turnbull's Tree Service

### Homebuilding/Remodeling Contractor

#### D.R. Horton

**Runners Up:** Hildreth Construction Services; Ohnemus Construction

### Exterior Contractor

#### All American Exteriors

**Runners Up:** Bengard Roofing; Whitey Exteriors ■



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## MEET Brenda Bussanmas

Having fun with math promotes learning.

Brenda Bussanmas grew up in the Norwalk area, mostly in Bevington and Indianola. After graduating high school from Martensdale St. Mary's, she attended Simpson College. Although Bussanmas knew that teaching was the path she was destined to take, she had a couple of different careers before completing her college degree to become a teacher. Now, Bussanmas will enter her first year teaching with the Norwalk Community School district this fall. She will be a fifth-grade math and science teacher.



Brenda Bussanmas is looking forward to starting the new school year in a new district.

"I am most excited about the opportunities I will have at Norwalk to extend my teaching skills. Each year I have taught, I have learned more about teaching and myself. This coming year will be even more interesting with new curriculums, district and coworkers to learn with and from," she says.

Bussanmas says she likes working with students at the elementary school level because of the excitement students have when learning something new. She enjoys being able to make school fun and entertaining while learning.

In her previous position, Bussanmas participated in professional development that demonstrated many ways to incorporate small groups, whole-group teaching, and partner groupings. She is eager to bring some of the skills she's learned into her Norwalk classroom. Although learning math can be difficult, finding ways to have fun with the subject has been successful for Bussanmas in the past and has proven to get her students motivated to learn.

"Every district is different. And each group of students every year is different. And, in teaching, you never stop learning as the teacher. So, I'm looking forward to learning about the new curriculums I have, the district's way of doing things, the teachers I get to work with and, of course, all about the new students I will have," she says.

When not teaching, Bussanmas likes to read, watch football, go to the beach in the summer, and spend time with her children, her friends and her dogs. She is a mom to four kids. Her oldest son is starting his fifth year at Wartburg College where he plays on the football team. Her oldest daughter is starting her sophomore year at UNI in the Elementary Education department. Her younger daughter will be a sophomore at Norwalk High School, and her 2-year-old keeps her busy and on her toes. ■

# Fall

# Kick-Off

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“When it is in your power, don’t withhold good from the one to whom it belongs. Don’t say to your neighbor, ‘Go away! Come back later. I’ll give it tomorrow,’ when it is there with you” (Proverbs 3:27-28). Those words not only stand out in the pages of the Bible, but they also stand out in the heart of the Norwalk Area Ministerial Association and those in our community who are working and serving to come alongside people in our area who simply need a hand up. As a fairly long-time resident of the Norwalk area (since 1992), I have watched our community grow, not only in population through the years, but also in the number of people who have a need and those who are involved in reaching out to those in need.



Through the efforts of the ministerial association these days, almost any and every kind of need that exists is being addressed in one way or another. In a pinch financially? Need help with your utilities? Is food security an issue? Short on furniture? Got a vehicle that needs repair? Are the kids outgrowing their clothes? Medical issues weighing you down? All these needs and more can be addressed. In fact, throughout the year, various events are also offered to meet people and their needs right where they are, like Shoe Love, the Mobile Food Pantry, Warrior Giving Project, Lunch in the Park, Warrior Giving Wednesday, and the Christmas Gifts Project. This is in addition to various outreaches of local churches designed to also provide in difficult times like the Free Medical Clinic, among others. Of course, the Norwalk Area Food Pantry is open every week as well.

As a member of the ministerial association, I can assure you that

it is our hope and prayer that, in the Norwalk area, when a neighbor experiences a need, that need can be met with love and support. Why? Not only because it’s the right thing to do, but also because it’s in line with the heart of God. God makes lots of promises in the Bible when it comes to meeting the needs of people around us. For example, “Kindness to the poor is a loan to the Lord, and he will give a reward to the lender” (Proverbs 19:17). “The one who shuts his ears to the cry of the poor will himself also call out and not be answered” (Prov. 21:13). “A generous person will be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor” (Prov. 22:9). “The one who gives to the poor will not be in need, but the one who turns his eyes away will receive many curses” (Prov. 28:27). “When you host a banquet, invite those who are poor, maimed, lame or blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous” (Luke 14:13-14).

I encourage you to join the movement of people who are making life better for everyone in the Norwalk area. If you see a need, do something about it yourself. Consider contacting the ministerial association to serve at one of our events. If you’ve been blessed beyond your own personal needs, practice God-honoring generosity and share with others around you. Together, let’s make it hard for anyone in our area to have a need that isn’t being met. Not only will this make Norwalk a very unique and blessed place to live, but it will also honor God who desires the needy be cared for by those of us who can lend a hand. ■

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

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# BUYING and selling your home in today's market

Navigating the real estate market can be challenging, whether you're buying your first home or selling a property. With the right strategies and knowledge, you can streamline the process and achieve your goals. Let's get started.



down your search and shows sellers you are a serious buyer.

**Selecting your Realtor:** Your real estate agent plays a crucial role in your transaction. Discuss your short and long-term goals with your agent to ensure alignment. Choosing a home is more than just buying a house; it's a significant investment in your future. Ask questions and be clear about what you want from your home now and in the next 5-10 years. A capable Realtor can help you find a property that meets your needs and fits your budget.

**Planning your purchase or sale:** Buying or selling a house requires careful planning and thoughtful decisions. Set clear goals and invest wisely to create a home that fits your needs and offers a good return on investment. When selling, make sure your home is in the best possible condition to attract buyers. This may involve making necessary repairs, staging the home, and ensuring it is clean and inviting. When buying, focus on what you can handle or afford to maintain, ensuring your home

remains in good condition and a valuable asset.

**Marketing and listing your home:** If you're selling, work with your agent to market your home effectively. This includes professional photography, creating compelling listings, and leveraging online platforms to reach a broad audience. Open houses and virtual tours can also attract potential buyers. Pricing your home competitively is crucial. Research similar properties in your area and set a realistic price.

Buying and selling a home is a multifaceted process that you should not tackle alone. By assembling a trustworthy team, securing a mortgage pre-approval, and selecting a dedicated Realtor, you lay a strong foundation for success. Careful preparation and effective marketing can significantly enhance the selling process, while thoughtful buying decisions ensure a valuable, lasting investment. Embrace the process and enjoy the rewarding experience of finding your perfect home. Happy home hunting. ■

Information provided by Abby Brenizer, Re/Max Precision, 515-249-4104, [abby@precisiondsm.com](mailto:abby@precisiondsm.com).

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14 Norwalk Living magazine AUGUST | 2024 [www.iowalivingmagazines.com](http://www.iowalivingmagazines.com)

## COMMUNICATING with someone with Alzheimer's

Communicating with someone who has Alzheimer's disease can be challenging. People with Alzheimer's may struggle to find the right words, forget what they are saying, or have trouble understanding what others are saying. Patience and thoughtful communication strategies can significantly enhance interactions and support their wellbeing. Here are some essential tips for effective communication. This guidance is based on information provided by the National Institute on Aging.



### Do

- Make eye contact and use their name: Establishing eye contact and addressing the person by their name can help create a sense of connection and focus their attention on the conversation. It shows respect and helps them feel acknowledged and valued.
- Allow extra time for responses: Patience is key when communicating with someone who has Alzheimer's. Allowing extra time for them to process information and respond can prevent frustration and encourage more meaningful interactions.
- Use different words if needed: If the person doesn't understand what you say the first time, try rephrasing your sentence or using simpler words. This can help in conveying the message more effectively and reduce confusion.
- Ask yes or no questions: Simplifying choices by asking yes or no questions can make it easier for the person to respond. For example, instead of asking, "What would you like to drink?" you might ask, "Would you like some tea?"

### Don't

- Exclude them from conversations: Always include the person in conversations, even if they are struggling to participate. Excluding them can lead to feelings of isolation and diminish their sense of self-worth.
- Speak with an angry or tense tone: Maintain a calm and reassuring tone when speaking. Anger or tension in your voice can cause distress and make communication more difficult.
- Talk about them as if they are not there: Avoid discussing the person as if they are not present. This can be very disheartening and disrespectful. Always involve them in the conversation and acknowledge their presence.
- Interrupt or argue: Interrupting or arguing with someone who has Alzheimer's can increase confusion and agitation. It's more beneficial to listen patiently and respond calmly.
- Ask if they remember something: Avoid asking the person whether they remember something or someone. This can lead to frustration and embarrassment if they do not remember. Instead, provide information and context without putting them on the spot.

By following these guidelines, you can foster more positive, supportive interactions with individuals with memory loss due to Alzheimer's disease. For more help and support in the journey of navigating dementia, including Alzheimer's disease, contact your local senior living or memory care community. ■

Information provided by Katie Salinas, Memory Care Manager, The Homestead at Holland Farms Senior Living, 2800 Sunset Drive, Norwalk, 515-981-1888, [www.HollandFarmsLiving.com](http://www.HollandFarmsLiving.com).

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## BACK to college

It's that time when students head off to college for another year of academic success. In addition to the usual supplies, parents and students should make sure they also have adequate insurance coverage for this stage of life.

The typical student brings a variety of expensive personal items to college, including a TV, stereo equipment, laptop, microwave and refrigerator. Most families will already have some coverage for these items. Typically, the parents' homeowners policy will cover property stolen away from home up to a limit of 10% of the contents coverage. For example, if the parents' home is insured for \$100,000, the contents coverage would be \$50,000, so the coverage for a student away at college would be \$5,000, minus the policy's deductible.

### Here are some other important things to consider.

- It's a good idea to inventory what your student will take to college. If there's an insurance claim, the burden of proof lies with the insured, and a list is helpful.
- Will your student take a computer to school? If so, talk to your agent about getting coverage for it. Many companies require a rider or special policy to cover computers on campus.
- Is your student residing in a dorm or off campus? This can make a



difference in your coverage also, so talk to your agent about options.

- If your student has a vehicle at college, it's important that your insurance company knows this. A vehicle is rated based on how it's used and in what city it's located.
- If your student doesn't have a vehicle at college and is more than 100 miles from home, you may benefit if a resident student rate is applied to the policy.
- If your student doesn't have a vehicle at college, he or she must still be rated on your auto policy because the student is still considered covered under the policy. This is especially important if the student drives an uninsured vehicle.
- When your student graduates or leaves school and declares his or her independence by moving into their own home or apartment, they should purchase their own policy covering his or her personal property. At this point, he or she is no longer a member of your household and, therefore, would no longer qualify for coverage.
- Finally, students are urged to be extra cautious in locking rooms and hiding valuables. They could also engrave numbers on expensive property, since marked items are less likely to be stolen, and marking can aid police in identification. ■

Lane Insurance would be happy to help examine your risks and suggest the best coverages for you and your family. Feel free to request a quote online at [laneinsurance.com](http://laneinsurance.com) or give us a call at 515-981-4614. Information provided by Mike Lane, Lane Insurance Agency Inc., 1225 Sunset Drive, Norwalk.

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MIKE LANE

# MAXIMIZE comfort with ductless technology

Mini-split systems are ductless, meaning they install easily and won't take up valuable space. They also forego energy losses typically associated with central forced-air systems.



Great news for homes and workspaces with air flow issues.... Ductless mini-split systems are a particularly excellent choice for you. Installing ductwork for traditional central air conditioning units is a major expense and requires cutting holes in walls, floors or ceilings and, often, decreasing closet space. Ductless installations require minimal adjustments to existing construction. Whether complementing your existing HVAC or even creating complete heating and cooling comfort in a new home or structure, ductless technology is a fantastic solution.

Mini-split heat pumps are not only great solutions for whole homes or new constructions but make good retrofit add-ons to houses with "non-ducted" heating systems, such as hydronic (hot water heat), radiant panels, and space

heaters. They can also be a good choice for room additions where extending or installing distribution ductwork is not feasible.

• **The smart choice in comfort.** As much as half of the energy used in your home goes to heating and cooling. Considering this, making smart decisions about your home's heating and air conditioning system can have a substantial impact on your utility bills — and your comfort.

The high energy efficiencies of ductless systems slash utility bills by up to 24%. For example, if your average annual utilities are \$4,200, adding a ductless system can save you approximately \$1,000 annually.

• **Proven reliability and features.** Ductless heat pump products are remarkably dependable: One product line advertises more than 99.9% of their leading product have never had to be replaced or removed from where they've been installed during the life expectancy of the unit.

The features are endless with ductless heat pump systems. The Inverter Technology allows the outdoor unit to vary its speed and output to match the required capacity of the indoor unit. Thus, the Inverter model can achieve 30%

more operating efficiency than conventional models. The built in energy savings program knows how to save you money even when you forget. This prevents wasteful operation to save energy without you having to think about it.

Full remote access enabled systems provide for system access and monitoring from any place in the world. The features and benefits are endless with the state of the art and proven technology that ductless heat pumps offer when installed by experienced and expert dealers.

• **The highest tax credits and electric rebates are available.** Depending on your power company, most are offering some of the highest installation rebates available. Starting in 2023 and extended through 2032, the Federal Energy Efficient Home Improvement Tax Credit increased the tax credit up to \$2,000 for qualified heat pumps. ■

If you have questions, or just simply want to speak to the experts about this or other comfort concerns, give Triple A Home Services a call. An HVAC expert answers/returns every call, and our expert advice is always free. 515-868-2779 Ext 1 or Dale@TripleAHomeServices.com

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## 2024 CITY OF NORWALK COMMUNITY SURVEY

Attention Norwalk Citizens,

A new community-based survey has been sent to all residents, and you may notice some social media posts about it as well. This is a legitimate survey that was commissioned by the City of Norwalk. This survey will gather feedback from our residents to ensure we remain focused on the priorities and services that are most important to you. Your input on this survey is extremely important. We need to hear from you!

We realize this survey takes a little time to complete, but the answers we receive will help influence decisions that will be made about the future of Norwalk. It is the City Council's goal to use this as a guide in continuing to provide a high quality of life for all residents. Please complete your survey in the next few days. Your individual responses will remain confidential. Visit <https://norwalksurvey.org/> or scan the QR code.

Aggregated results from the survey will be shared with residents and the City Council. Look for a summary of the survey results on the City's website, [norwalk.iowa.gov](http://norwalk.iowa.gov).

\*This survey is separate and unrelated to the U.S. Census data collection underway in Norwalk. Both surveys are very important, helping improve your community and ensuring that your feedback is counted.

If you have any questions about the citizen survey, please contact Tai Lieu at 515.201.6185 or [tlieu@norwalk.iowa.gov](mailto:tlieu@norwalk.iowa.gov).

Thank you for your time, your feedback, and for living in this great community we are all proud to call home.



### Rehabilitation Assistance Program

The City of Norwalk has established a program to help preserve and improve the community's housing stock that is affordable to low and moderate income (LMI) households. This program provides a 5-year forgivable loan from the City to assist with eligible housing rehabilitation projects.

Applicants must meet eligibility, income, and residency requirements.

Eligible repairs include siding, windows, doors, roofing, landscaping, sidewalk, driveway, structural, foundation, electrical HVAC, plumbing and others.

To find the full list of eligibility criteria, eligible repairs, terms of loan and application visit our website [norwalk.iowa.gov](http://norwalk.iowa.gov) under Community then Forms and Applications.

### New Development and Business Opportunity

Coming soon to Norwalk, Dunn Industrial Condominiums! Located in the Dunn Industrial Park on Delaware St., just west of HWY 28, is a fantastic new opportunity for all light industrial, trade, and contracting type businesses. Construction of the project is underway, and units will be available for lease and sale by spring, 2025.



"We are excited to bring the Dunn Industrial Condominiums to the Norwalk market! This will be a great addition for companies and businesses to expand in Norwalk or for new companies to find Norwalk and make it their preferred choice to do and conduct business!" Jared Husmann, President of KataLYST Team.

### Titan Self Storage Norwalk

The City of Norwalk is excited to announce that Titan Self Storage Norwalk is OFFICIALLY OPEN in the Dunn Industrial Park!

Titan Storage Norwalk, is a premier storage solution conveniently situated at 1050 Madison St, Norwalk, IA. The facility is located on the south side of Norwalk, just off Hwy 28 with easy access and a strategic location.

Titan Storage Norwalk is a 33k SF self-storage facility. It offers large storage units and outdoor parking for boats, RVs, and vehicles, with a fenced perimeter, controlled access gate, and video surveillance. Built with top-notch metal-framed construction ensuring water and pest resistance.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.titanstorageiowa.com>

Be sure to follow the City of Norwalk for more exciting news and projects coming to the community.



### Moonlight Movie Night

The Parks and Recreation Department will host Moonlight Movie Night at McAninch Sports Complex this Summer. Grab a blanket or chairs and join us for a Movie under the moonlight! Warrior Eats concession stand will be open for the event with a limited menu for your snack and drink needs.

**Registration times:** No registration required

**Program days/times:** Friday evenings at Sunset

August 9, 2024 - Trolls Band Together

September 13, 2024 - Coco

**Location:** McAninch Sports Complex

# city of norwalk newsletter

# AUGUST 2024

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## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT!

### Luke Nelson, City Manager

I grew up in Coggon, a small town near Cedar Rapids. I attended Iowa State University obtaining dual master's degrees in Public Administration and Community & Regional Planning. Prior to becoming Norwalk's City Manager in 2016 (8 years and loving it!), was the City Manager for the City of Boone for 8 years, the Planning Director in Boone County and a Zoning Tech in Warrenville, Illinois. I've done everything from delivering newspapers to inspecting septic systems.

I enjoy the people I work with and the variety of my job as City Manager. Norwalk is loaded with amazing citizens and great business owners. It is fun to be in a growing, vibrant community where my skill set is well utilized.

My wife, Bobbie, and I have been married for 20 years. We have one son, Nick, age 16. I also spend a lot of time with my dad (we take long motorcycle trips together) and I enjoy taking my mom out on dates. I also have a sister, Leia - same as Star Wars but we were born before the movie came out!

Outside of work, I enjoy mountain biking, road biking, weightlifting with my son, long motorcycle trips, rebuilding old motorcycles, car shows, construction projects with my son, camping with my family, fixing stuff and spending time with my super amazing wife.

Interesting fact: I used to race sportbikes (1000 Suzuki GSXR). They were open track days, but it felt like racing. We hit over 145mph on the straight-away. Once, I had the motorcycle up to 176 mph (off-highway, of course). If you aren't living on the edge, you are taking up too much space!



**Save the Date - Scribbles' Walk & Pet Fest**  
Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 28 for the 1st Annual Scribbles' Walk & Pet Fest!

The Library and Library Foundation are pairing up for this fun community event and library fundraiser. Participants are encouraged to register to walk (with or without) their furry friends on a short, 1-mile path near the library, ending in City Park for the Pet Fest featuring local vendors as well as a dog trick demo, food trucks, StoryWalk, and a pet costume contest. The event will be from 9 am-1 pm. Watch for full details on the library's web page, Facebook, and Instagram. Registrants will receive a t-shirt to show your support of our library. Don't miss it - the Scribbles' Walk & Pet Fest is sure to be a tail-wagging good time!

**Bilingual Storytime/Cuenta cuentos Bilingue**  
**Saturdays - August 3 & 17 at 10:30 a.m.**

Join us for exciting stories, songs, & activities at these bilingual storytimes in Spanish & English!

Recommended for children ages 5 & under and their caregivers.

Nuestra Biblioteca se complace en ofrecer cuentacuentos bilingue en Espanol e Ingles. Por favor acompanenos a escuchar historias emocionantes, cantos, y actividades. Recomendado para ninos de 5 anos y menores acompañados de un adulto.

**Forever Fit**  
**Mondays & Wednesdays, 9-10 a.m. & 10-11 a.m.**

Now offering two sessions due to popular demand! Forever Fit is a video-led adult fitness series, offering a rotation of strength training, stretching, & occasional guest presenters. Attendees should dress comfortably & bring water; we provide everything else! No registration is required.

**Maker Wednesday**  
**Wednesday, August 28 - 2:00-3:30 p.m.**

Back to school time means Maker Wednesdays are back too! Make, tinker, & create with us - on Wednesdays when Norwalk Schools are in session & releasing early, we'll offer at, building, & STEM activities recommended for ages 5 & older. No registration is required - just drop in!

## IMPORTANT LINKS FOR NORWALK!

### New Playbooks

View our updated Aquatic Center and Summer Parks & Recreation playbooks.



### Rent for Your Next Event!

Reserve a Norwalk Park Shelter or the Aquatic Center.



### Purchase an Aquatic Center Membership



### City State Bank Norwalk Fieldhouse

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**LEGAL** By Ken Winjum

## WHEN farm animals escape

It is expected that those who raise farm animals will keep such animals fenced in and away from the public. When cows, horses or other animals escape, they can present a danger to motorists, adjoining property owners or others.



When damage is caused by a loose farm animal, a question arises as to whether the owner of the farm animal is liable for that damage. Iowa has an interesting history on this question, and a recent Iowa Supreme Court case appears to make it more difficult to successfully make a claim against the animal owner.

In 1924, the Iowa legislature enacted what was known as the "fencing in" act. Under this act, "All animals shall be restrained by the owners thereof from running at large." Applying this statute, Iowa courts held that evidence that an animal was at large on the highway was prima facie evidence that the animal owner was negligent.

In 1994, the legislature repealed the "fencing in" act. The Supreme Court of Iowa was presented with the question of how this affected an animal owner's duty in the case of *Klobnak v. Wildwood Hills*, 688 N.W.2d 799 (2004). In that case, the plaintiffs were injured when their car collided with two horses that were running free on the highway.

The Supreme Court observed that it was true the horse owners had no statutory duty to restrain their horses because the "fencing in" statute had been repealed. The Court also noted that no specific duty to restrain livestock exists in common law.

Nevertheless, the Court recognized that an owner still has a duty to use ordinary care when harboring animals and may be liable if he could reasonably anticipate that injury may occur if they roam at large.

In the recent case of *Singh v. McDermott*, 2 NW3d 422 (Iowa 2024) a long-haul trucker was injured when his truck struck a cow that was on the interstate. The owner of the cow had property that abutted the highway with fences and gates for the confinement of cattle.

It was not disputed that the cow strayed onto the interstate in the middle of the night and was unattended at the time of the collision. Nevertheless, the Court determined that the plaintiff had a duty to provide evidence that the owner was negligent. The Court explicitly rejected any claim that the cow's mere presence on the interstate provided sufficient evidence of negligence. Instead, the case was one in which expert testimony was necessary.

**Conclusion:** Animal owners have a duty of ordinary care to the public. However, the mere fact that an animal is loose, without proof of negligence, is not enough to recover damages. ■

Information provided by Ken Winjum, The Winjum Law Firm, P.L.C., 1220 Sunset Drive., Suite 103, Norwalk, 515-981-5220, [www.winjumlaw.com](http://www.winjumlaw.com).



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## GIVING back in numerous ways

Croll enjoys being a “conduit of joy.”

After moving to Norwalk with her family in 2017, Angie Croll began volunteering to make new friends in her new town.



“I was surprised that Norwalk felt like ‘home’ very quickly despite my being a lifelong Urbandale resident,” she says.

Most of her volunteer work is with the Norwalk Area Ministerial Association, which is a group of churches working together to provide immediate assistance for community members’ basic needs in times of crisis.

“I like the variety of tasks that I do, from handing food over to a person who didn’t know where their next meal was coming from to picking up a sofa from a joy-filled donor,” Croll says. “I like to say that I am the ‘conduit of joy’ when I volunteer with the Ministerial Association.”

She not only gets to experience the fulfillment of donors when they hand over a donation that will have a second life, but she also gets to witness the gratitude of recipients when they receive an item that will make their life easier.

“It’s truly an honor to be in the position of experiencing this joy on both sides,” Croll says.

She also serves on the Warren County Conservation Board and the Norwalk Parks and Recreation Commission because she enjoys being a part of the planning and legacy of her town and county.

In addition, Croll has volunteered with her kids’ scout groups, church classes and sports teams. She and her two older children enjoy volunteering together at the Iowa Honey Producers Booth at the Iowa State Fair as well.

In recognition of all she does for the community, Croll was honored to be named the Norwalk Area Chamber’s Citizen of the Year in 2023.

For Croll, volunteering has always been a part of her life. She hopes other people find a passion for it, too.

“God has called me to love others. I love others by service, whether that’s bringing my neighbor’s garbage can to their garage or resetting tables and chairs after an event,” she says. “I would encourage everyone to find time to give back, even if it’s just for a few hours a month. Giving back is integral to being a part of a community, which is so important for mental health.”

Croll encourages people to be creative in where they volunteer, too.

“It seems like food for low-income families is the most well-known way to volunteer, but there are so many other places to spend your valuable time,” she says. “Beer tents at music festivals need servers. Blood banks need blood donations. MOPS needs volunteers to lead and mentor



Jason Siemens of Edward Jones presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Angie Croll, who volunteers with the Norwalk Area Ministerial Association.

moms. SHIIP needs volunteers to help navigate Medicare choices. Youth sports teams need positive and encouraging coaches. Social groups, like Scouts, need leaders. The possibilities are endless.” ■

### Do you know a neighbor who deserves recognition?

Nominate him or her at [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com).



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# THE RISK of waiting for the market to drop

Two common investment phrases engrained into the human brain are: "What goes up must eventually come back down" and "Buy low and sell high." These phrases are examples of market timing. Unfortunately, market timing is nearly impossible to get right on a consistent basis, even for the most experienced investors. For market timing to work perfectly, you must be right not once but twice. You have to be right on timing when to get out of the market and right again on the timing of when to get back into the market.



Recently, we have seen positive market performance, including some all-time market highs after coming off a two-year stretch of extremely high market volatility. These all-time highs can be a bit nerve-racking for investors who have cash sitting on the sidelines looking to jump into the markets, causing uncertainty whether to jump in now or wait out the all-time highs for the next market dip.

When investing in the market, it is important to make decisions based on long-term expectations and goals rather than short-term assumptions. Entering the market during market highs isn't a poor decision when investing for the long term. Timing the market for the next drop could take months, sometimes even years, causing you to miss out on large potential investment growth opportunities. Research shows higher investment returns

result from time spent in the market rather than jumping in and out of the market during periods of market highs and lows.

History has shown there are more positive years in the market than negative years. It has also shown that new market highs generally lead to even more market highs in the following days, months and sometimes even years. However, there may be some market dips along the way. So far in 2024, we have seen several new all-time market highs. If you would have sold during one of the past market highs, it would have prevented you from being invested during the next all-time market high.

The focus when investing in the market should be on consistency rather than looking for the perfect opportunity to get in and out. Stay focused on your long-term goals. If you are on the fence about investing during market highs, we have some ways to help. Dollar cost averaging and selecting the correct risk tolerance portfolio for you can help with easing back into the markets. ■

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

## Welcome Dr. Brian Dang

**Dr. Brian Dang** is from Sioux City, IA. His father was a pilot in the Vietnam war and his mother escaped Vietnam in 1975 when the war ended. His father had to escape quickly without being captured as a prisoner to the Viet Cong. His parents had many obstacles adjusting to living in the United States without anyone to help them. His mother lost her father during the war and came here with her two younger siblings and her mother who was sick. She eventually met Dr. Dang's father and had his oldest brother who is 20 years older than Dr. Dang!. Since she was the oldest and her mother was sick, she kept busy with Dr. Dang's father raising her younger siblings and his older brother.



Due to coming to a new country and being busy raising a family, his parents never had chance to learn good oral habits and had a lot of dental issues. While his parents worked any job they could in a new country, they eventually put Dr. Dang's older brother through engineering school at Iowa State University. Since Dr. Dang's older brother was 20 years older than he was, he introduced Dr. Dang to engineering growing up.

This pushed Dr. Dang to go to engineering school

where he graduated from the University of Iowa College of Engineering. However, he pursued becoming a dentist and graduated from the University of Iowa College of Dentistry. He wanted to become a dentist because he saw how his parents struggled with dental issues and having a language barrier that made it worse for them since dentistry can be scary when you cannot understand what is going on.

Motivated by his parents' struggles with dental care and language barriers, Dr. Dang strives to make dental procedures non-intimidating, drawing on his engineering expertise to deliver optimal treatments. Passionate about dentistry, he integrates his engineering background to ensure his patients receive top-notch care and results.

In his free time, he loves playing with his nephews, playing pickleball, golfing, cooking and working with Rubik's cubes.



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## EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

### Warrior Giving Wednesday: Shoe Love

Aug. 14, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Norwalk Christian Church, 701 Main St.

Help your Norwalk neighbors by dropping of new socks and underwear for kids and adults or by making a donation through Venmo @ norwalk-ministerial. Future collections are: Sept. 11, laundry supplies; Oct. 9, household paper (toilet paper, tissues, paper towels, napkins); Nov. 13, cleaning supplies (all-purpose cleaner, dish soap, toilet cleaner, sponges and cleaning cloths).

### Norwalk Women's Connection meeting

Tuesday, Aug. 20, 6:30 p.m.

Luana Savings Bank community room, 9321 Market Place Drive, Norwalk

NWC meets the third Tuesday of every month at 6:30-8 p.m. (buffet opens at 6:15 p.m.) All women from Norwalk and surrounding communities, ages 13 and older, are invited to attend. Cost is \$14 inclusive, check/cash only, payable at the door.

The Aug. 20 NWC event features "Crafting Timeless Art with Precision Technology," presented by Tiffany Lawyer and Gary Myer, followed by Linn Ann Huntington from Hays, Kansas, an award-winning journalist and author. She will inspire and help to make sense of what's happening in the world. For reservations, call Mary Lou at 515-360-4926, text Gwen at 515-371-9596, or email lgray@Toast2.net by Aug. 17. Cancellations required by Aug. 18.

### Norwalk Farmers Market

Fridays through Oct. 11

Norwalk Christian Church parking lot, 701 Main St.

Norwalk's Farmers Market offers locally grown fruit and vegetables, baked goods, meat, eggs, honey, fresh flowers and crafts.

### Car Show, Tractor Show and Swap Meet

Aug. 24, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Warren County Fairgrounds, Highway 92, Indianola

The Two-Lane Cruisers of Iowa is hosting this event. To enter or for more information, call Curtis or Cliff, 515-577-2279 or 515-419-3824.



### Moonlight Movie Nights

Fridays, Aug. 9 and Sept. 13,

starting at sunset

McAninch Sports Complex

The Park and Recreation Department will host Moonlight Movie Nights. Grab a blanket or chairs and join in. Warrior Eats concessions will have snacks and drinks for purchase. Movies will be, Aug. 9, "Trolls Band Together," and Sept. 13, "Coco." ■



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\*APY is Annual Percentage Yield. Rates accurate as of July 26, 2024. To qualify, the individual must be 18 years of age or younger. \$500 minimum balance to obtain APY. Two additional deposits may be made to this account during the 12 month term; minimum deposit of \$100 required for each deposit. Rates and terms may change without notice. Early withdrawal penalties may apply. Fees may reduce earnings.

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# NEWS From Norwalk Women's Connection



The Planning Team of Norwalk Women's Connection

A big thank you to everyone who helped celebrate the one-year anniversary of Norwalk Women's Connection on July 16. The very first meeting was held on July 18, 2023, at the Luana Savings Bank community room with Angie Hablom of Norwalk's Beautiful Reflections Salon Studio as the special feature, Norwalk's Lori Nielsen as soloist, and a Stonecroft inspirational speaker, Karen Anderson from Minnetonka, Minnesota, with 61 women in attendance. Other small businesses that NWC supported and promoted throughout our first year were: Bellflower Florist & Gifts, Lula Belle Designs, Michaela's Kitchen, Fence Row Photography, Lauren Igor professional guitarist, Whiskers TNR of Warren County, Bedwell Gardens, The Fat Cookie, Officer Jack Haller and Bochner Farms Flowers & Daylilies.

Norwalk Women's Connection is affiliated with Stonecroft located in Kansas City, Missouri. Stonecroft is a non-profit 501(c)(3) non-denominational organization that has been in existence for 85 years. For more information, go to [www.stonecroft.org](http://www.stonecroft.org). The purpose of Norwalk Women's Connection is to meet ordinary women "where they are and as they are" for extraordinary purposes which ultimately impacts their lives and their communities. This all happens in a festive environment created for a night full of fun, food, friends, inspiration and door prizes.

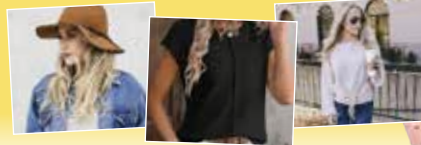
NWC meets the third Tuesday of every month at Luana Savings Bank community room, 9321 Market Place Dr., Norwalk. The event begins at 6:30 p.m. (buffet opens at 6:15 p.m.) and ends at 8 p.m. All women from Norwalk and surrounding communities, ages 13 and older, are invited to attend. Cost is \$14 inclusive, check/cash only, payable at the door.

The Aug. 20 NWC event features "Crafting Timeless Art with Precision Technology," presented by Tiffany Lawyer and Gary Myer, followed by Linn Ann Huntington from Hays, Kansas, an award-winning journalist and author. She will inspire and help to make sense of what's happening in the world. For reservations, call Mary Lou at 515-360-4926, text Gwen at 515-371-9596, or email [lgray@Toast2.net](mailto:lgray@Toast2.net) by Aug. 17. Follow the QR code for more information. ■



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## TASTY recipes to combat the hustle and bustle

(Family Features) Jam-packed calendars and little spare time at home can make heads spin. When those hectic weeknights are giving your family fits, turn to delicious recipes you can have ready in 30 minutes or less.

Start with kitchen staples like chicken and rice. They're easy to prepare and versatile enough to let you cook a variety of meals without feeling like you're stuck in a dinner rut. For example, these air-fryer bang bang chicken tenders with rice offer a kid-friendly take on bang bang chicken that's both sweet and spicy.

This air-fryer favorite requires just half an hour in the kitchen and calls on the quality and convenience of Success Boil-in-Bag Jasmine Rice to make busy weeknights a breeze. In just 10 minutes, the aromatic rice cooks up soft and fluffy with a uniquely delicious flavor that's naturally gluten free, Non-GMO Project Verified and free of MSG and preservatives.

Find more ways to solve dinnertime dilemmas at [SuccessRice.com](https://www.SuccessRice.com). ■

### Air-fryer bang bang chicken tenders with rice

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Servings: 4

- 1 pound chicken tenders
- 1/2 cup sweet chili sauce, divided
- 1/4 cup sriracha hot sauce, divided
- 2 tablespoons sesame oil
- 1 bag Success Jasmine Rice
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1 bag (12 ounces) coleslaw mix
- 1/2 English cucumber, thinly sliced
- toasted sesame seeds, for garnish (optional)
- green onions, for garnish (optional)

#### DIRECTIONS

- Toss chicken tenders with 2 tablespoons sweet chili sauce and 1 tablespoon sriracha. Drizzle with sesame oil.
- Preheat air-fryer to 400 F. In two batches, without overfilling basket, air fry chicken tenders, turning basket halfway during



cook time, 10-12 minutes, or until chicken is golden brown and cooked through.

- Prepare rice according to package directions. Stir mayonnaise with remaining sweet chili sauce and sriracha until blended. In large bowl, toss coleslaw mix with 1/4 cup bang bang mayo sauce.
- Divide rice among four bowls. Top with chicken, coleslaw mix and cucumber. Drizzle with remaining bang bang mayo sauce.
- Garnish with toasted sesame seeds and green onions, if desired.



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## OLD yella

### Locals have fun with largest dandelion contest

Dandelions are the bane of many a yard owner's existence.

That is unless you're Casey Bright or another member of a large group of locals who have a certain kind of affection for the yellow-headed weeds.

Each year, Bright and dozens of others scour fence lines, fields and yards in search of the "good" dandelions. Good, as in "large and in charge." These yearly hunts have blossomed into a competition — The Great Annual Iowa Dandelion Contest — an endeavor in which the participants attempt to wrangle that longest version of the plant they can find, measure it and post it to social media for posterity's sake.

The contest, which began in 2019, is lighthearted and fun, Bright says. But, naturally, where there's competition, there are people wanting to win. And they'll go to all lengths to do so, including keeping secret where "the big dandies" grow.

Bright, who was crowned the winner of the 2024 competition, knows where the tall ones are. Unlike morel mushroom hunters, though, he's willing to share.

"I scout places where new homes are being built, and they just let the weeds go crazy," he says. "This year, there was a new development by the water tower in Norwalk that they didn't touch all spring. I was able to find a huge patch of yard breakers (dandelions that are more than a yard in length)."

That's where he found the winning "pull," which was more than 38 inches long. Lengths are measured from the point in which the dandelion snaps off to the "cap" of the dandelion.

There's technique involved in that, too. Bright's go-to is simple: He runs his finger all the way down to the root, pushes said finger into the soil, then "snaps that bad boy off." He carries a little tape measure with him at all times. When he spots what he thinks could be a winner, he stops, measures and goes from there.

Storms and lawn mowers are the biggest "enemies," Bright says.

All ages are welcome to join the fun, Bright says. And it's not exclusive to Norwalk either. The more the merrier. There's no trophy or other grand prize to be had — just some good old fashioned yellow-head hunting.

"There's nothing to worry about with people getting crazy about it," he says. "It's more of a happy community of people out there having some fun." ■



Norwalk's Casey Bright was the winner of this year's The Great Annual Iowa Dandelion Contest with a "pull" of 38 inches.

## 'IT'S A guarantee'

Did you know that prepaying funeral arrangements allows you the opportunity to have service selections and merchandise selections prepaid and guaranteed?

So, what does that mean? The services provided by the funeral home that are paid in advance will be provided at no additional expense to the family at the time those services are needed in the future. Merchandise selections that are prepaid are also guaranteed to be provided at no additional expense to the family.

You might be wondering, "What if the casket I want is no longer available when I die?" Given that you are guaranteed the casket you select, or one of comparable value, your family would have a replacement option to consider that is guaranteed to not be inferior to the one that was purchased in advance.

Imagine going to the car dealership and purchasing a brand new car — but delaying delivery for several years — all with the guarantee you will be provided a brand new car when you are ready to accept delivery... at no additional cost at that time. That would be a pretty amazing deal.

That is what you can do by prepaying funeral expenses. Plus, you will be making a future event less stressful by giving thought and consideration to these important decisions now.

Ask your preferred funeral provider if they offer a guaranteed plan. ■



Information provided by Sarah Masteller, Advanced Planning Counselor, Hamilton's Southtown Funeral Home, 5400 S.W. Ninth St., Des Moines, 515-697-3679.

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## AFRAID of injectables?

Many people have a fear of needles or substances going into their face. While those treatments are safe and effective, they aren't necessarily for everyone. The question then is, "What can I do instead?"

Plenty. There are treatments that can improve discoloration, give the face a more lifted appearance, help skin tone/texture and are great anti-aging.

Quality medical-grade skincare is important. It's the foundation of anything a quality spa does. Most offer free consultations to get you on the right track with corrective skincare and other treatments.

Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) targets brown and red discoloration in the skin to give a more even skin color and get rid of broken blood vessels and sun damage. Hydrafacials can help your skin texture and tone, give you an amazing glow and correct imbalances such as acne, wrinkles, discoloration, dryness and dullness. Chemical peels are also available to help with acne, scarring, fine lines/wrinkles, discoloration and general skin health.

"Exion Face" promotes hydration and collagen production. This is amazing for lifting the skin, plumping the lips without filler, and for fine lines and wrinkles around the eyes and mouth. "EmFace" uses a technology to strengthen the facial muscles to lift the face and get rid of deep wrinkles. It also helps a double chin. ■

Information provided by Jen Penisten, MSN, RN, NP-C, CEO/owner, Vivid Life Spa, 1016 Main St., Norwalk, 515-850-7848, [livin-vivid.com/life-spa](http://livin-vivid.com/life-spa)



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## PREVENT sports injuries

The old adage, "No pain, no gain," might be hurting your child's athletic career more than what you might think. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), participation in organized sports is on the rise. Nearly 30 million children and adolescents participate in youth sports in the United States. This increase in play has led to some other startling statistics about injuries among America's young athletes:

1. High school athletes account for an estimated two million injuries, 500,000 doctor visits and 30,000 hospitalizations each year.
2. More than 3.5 million kids younger than age 14 receive medical treatment for sports injuries each year.
3. Overuse injuries are responsible for nearly half of all sports injuries to middle and high school students.
4. According to the CDC, more than half of all sports injuries in children are preventable.

Chiropractic care has been shown to decrease injuries and provide faster recovery time when compared to injuries treated only with physical therapy. Many chiropractors are experts at the treatment and prevention of sports injuries. If you or your child is experiencing pain, call a chiropractor today to schedule your consultation to get you back into the game. ■

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



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## HEALTH

By Dr. Michael O'Meara

## DIAGNOSING and treating styes

**Q: I have developed a problem with my right eyelid. It has a sore, swollen lump in it. Should I get it checked out?**

**A:** Yes. You may have a hordeolum, commonly called a sty, which is a bacterial infection of an oil-producing gland in the eyelid. It usually forms a reddened, tender nodule which may have pus visible in it if it is located at the edge of the lid. This condition is common and is often associated with contact lens wear, use of old eye makeup and blepharitis. Blepharitis is a condition causing chronic inflammation of the eyelids.

Diagnosis is made by examination with an eye microscope. Treatment usually includes the use of compresses over the affected area with a warm, wet washcloth or a commercially made moist heat mask followed by gentle massage. This promotes enhanced blood flow to the lids. The compresses are used a few times a day for 10-20 minutes for several days. If warm compresses do not relieve the condition, then antibiotics are often prescribed in the form of eyedrops or ointment and / or capsules or tablets to fight the infection.

Once the infection has cleared, be sure to always wash your hands before doing activities where your lids may be touched. It is best to start with new contact lenses and fresh eye makeup. Blepharitis, if present, should be treated. The use of eyelid cleansing foam or pads at bedtime can also reduce the risk of another episode. ■

Information provided by Dr. Michael O'Meara, Optometric Associates of Warren County, PC, 1228 Sunset Drive, Norwalk, and 225 West Ashland Ave., Indianola.



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## HEALTH

By Dr. Maureen Winslow

## BUILDING strong smiles for your child

As parents, we want the best for our children. Ensuring your child's dental health is no exception, and it starts with caring for their baby teeth. By focusing on a balanced diet and good brushing habits early on, you can set your child up for success.

Many parents are drawn to fruit juice, refined carbohydrates, and fruit snacks for their children because they're easy, and they make our children happy. Juice is the leading cause of tooth decay in children, and fruit snacks are just candy in disguise. These foods should be a treat and not part of everyday diets. Opt instead for whole fruits/veggies, cheese, or nuts at snacktime. Foster brushing with fluoride toothpaste twice per day, helping them develop proper technique as they grow. Toothbrushing should be a hands-on activity at least until your child is capable of tying their own shoes.

Early visits to the dentist familiarize your child with oral care and allow for preventive treatments like sealants to protect their teeth. This also alleviates dental-related anxiety by normalizing the visits of dental cleanings without needing a lot of dental work done. By establishing these habits early, you set the foundation for a lifetime of healthy smiles and confident dental visits. Routine dental care is key to ensuring your child's teeth stay strong and their smiles bright. ■



Information provided by Dr. Maureen Winslow, Norwalk Family Dentistry, 1101 Chatham Ave., Suite A, Norwalk, 515-256-9000, [www.norwalkfamilydentistry.com](http://www.norwalkfamilydentistry.com).

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# HAS YOUR child's hearing loss been misdiagnosed as a learning disability?

The CDC reports that approximately 15% of school-age children, ages 6 to 19, have a hearing loss of at least 16 dB in one or both ears.



With the right interventions, children with hearing loss can be just as successful in school as their peers who have normal hearing. However, left undiagnosed and untreated, hearing loss can have major effects that can mimic a learning disability.

Because the symptoms of untreated hearing loss and learning disabilities so closely imitate each other, it can be easy for a child to be misdiagnosed. Below we review how hearing and learning are connected and how to help a student with hearing loss in the classroom.

## How hearing and learning are connected

In very young children, untreated hearing loss leads to speech and language delays, which later translates to learning problems and poor school performance in older school-age children.

Even a very mild hearing loss can cause difficulty keeping up, as a child may be able to hear but not understand. Additionally, a mild hearing loss may not be noticeable and end up going untreated for longer.

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) reports that children who have mild to moderate untreated hearing loss are likely to be behind their peers by one to four grade levels. In addition, those with more severe untreated hearing loss usually do not progress beyond a third-grade level.

## How to help students with hearing loss

It's certainly not the case that students with hearing loss are less intelligent than their peers with normal hearing. Unfortunately, it is often the case that classrooms are not set up to

accommodate students with hearing loss, and teachers are not always trained to teach in a way that is accommodating to this type of disability.

If you're a teacher and have students with suspected hearing loss, you can look out for signs such as:

- Inattentiveness
- Inappropriate responses to questions
- Daydreaming
- Trouble following spoken directions
- Speech problems

If you're a parent and suspect your child has hearing loss, it's important to schedule an appointment for a hearing test right away. The sooner your child's hearing loss is diagnosed and treated, the better their academic performance will be.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, call your local audiologist today. ■

Information provided by Dr. Kelly Cook, Audiologist, Iowa Hearing Center, 1228 Sunset Drive, Suite B, Norwalk, 515-416-5990, [www.iowahearingcenter.com](http://www.iowahearingcenter.com).

## EFFECTS OF Hearing Loss ON Learning



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# WELCOME to the newest chamber members

With great enthusiasm, we announce the latest additions to our chamber community: Manchester Leasing Services, Inc., Titan Self Storage Norwalk, Domino's, Kwik Star, In2It Digital, and Athlure.



These new members bring our total membership to 222, marking a significant milestone in our ongoing growth and development.

• **Manchester Leasing Services, Inc.** is a nationwide fleet management firm. They specialize in managing small to medium-sized vehicle fleets. Their expertise extends to highly upfitted service and delivery vehicles.

• **Titan Self Storage Norwalk**, located at 1050 Madison St., provides a variety of self-storage options tailored to meet specific needs. Their facility is equipped with large storage units, including boat and RV parking, ensuring ample space for all storage requirements. Their state-of-the-art video surveillance and controlled

access systems guarantee the safety and security of belongings, providing peace of mind.

• **Domino's** is committed to delivering exceptional pizza and customer service. Situated at 1300 Turnberry Dr., Suite 100, Domino's ensures that every order meets the high standards associated with the brand.

• **In2It Digital** specializes in branding, web design, and social media strategies tailored for nonprofits, entrepreneurs and small businesses. They are committed to empowering clients with exceptional marketing solutions that drive success.

• **Kwik Star** is a family-owned company that has proudly served communities since 1965. They offer a wide range of products and services, from fresh foods and bakery items to fuel and everyday essentials. Kwik Star prioritizes quality and freshness, producing many offerings in their facilities, including dairy, bakery and kitchens. This commitment ensures customers receive only the best.

• **Athlure** is driven by a commitment to

bridging the gap between small businesses in Iowa and the ever-evolving digital landscape. Founded in 2023 by Brian Warren, Athlure aims to empower local enterprises with the tools and strategies necessary to thrive in today's competitive market.

As we continue to grow, we are reminded that each new member represents new possibilities, connections and opportunities for collaboration. Together, we are building a stronger, more resilient Norwalk, where businesses can flourish and community spirit thrives.

Welcome, new members. We are delighted to have you with us and look forward to achieving great things together.

If you haven't joined the chamber, and you're a new business in Norwalk, we invite you to join. Contact Mel Guanci at [info@norwalkchamber.org](mailto:info@norwalkchamber.org). ■

Information provided by Mel Guanci, Executive Director, Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce.

promote. connect. grow.

View the business directory  
[norwalkchamber.org](http://norwalkchamber.org)

## Connecting Community to Business

**norwalk**  
Area Chamber of Commerce  
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### Community Events

- Ribbon Cuttings
- Member Programming
- Fall Warren County Women's Mentoring Event
- RUNorwalk 5K & 10K

### Welcome Center

- Business Directory
- Event Calendar
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Membership Information



Connect with the  
Norwalk Area Chamber  
and Join Today!

# MATHIS honored by Veterinary Dental College

Animal Dentistry Referral Services announces that Dr. Jennifer R. Mathis has been admitted as a diplomate of the American Veterinary Dental College (AVDC). This prestigious achievement marks her as one of around 300 dental specialists in the world (or one of less than 250 in North America) to hold this rigorous specialty degree, demonstrating her exceptional expertise and dedication to veterinary dental care. Veterinary dental care encompasses a wide range of advanced procedures, including periodontal therapies such as guided tissue regeneration, advanced 3D imaging, oral tumor removal, oral fracture repair, root canal therapy, crowns and orthodontics.

In addition, Dr. Mathis has been honored with the 2024 Continuing Educator of the Year Award by the Viticus Group at the Western Veterinary Conference (WVC). This award is a testament to her outstanding

contributions to veterinary education and her unwavering commitment to advancing the field.

"It's a huge honor to be selected among more than 375 eligible continuing educators," said Dr. Mathis. "WVC holds a special place in my heart. Receiving this award brings back fond memories of the great times I've had educating and presenting to veterinary professionals. It is an honor to be recognized by such a respected organization. I plan to have more fun teaching March 2-5, 2025."

Looking to the future, Dr. Mathis is excited to announce the upcoming launch of a new teaching center in early 2025. This state-of-the-art facility will accommodate 20 hands-on lab participants or 60 lecture students, providing an exceptional environment for veterinary professionals to enhance their skills and knowledge. ■



Dr. Jennifer R. Mathis

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# OUT & ABOUT

# JULY 4<sup>TH</sup>

# Parade

Norwalk 4th of July Parade



American Legion Post #562



Norwalk Girls Rugby



Gregg Young of Norwalk



Kate Carlson Realtor



DNA Exteriors



Exit Realty North Star



Explosion Roller Hockey



Fellowship Community Church

# OUT & ABOUT



Crayons 2 Pencils Early Learning Center, Favorite Warren County Preschool/Daycare; and Crayons 2 Pencils Recreation Center, runner up, Favorite Warren County Place for Children's Birthday Parties



Bedwell Gardens, runner up, Favorite Warren County Nursery or Garden Center



Norwalk Family Dentistry, Favorite Warren County Dental Office



Wilkins Counseling Services, Favorite Warren County Mental Health Service



Optometric Associates, Favorite Warren County Vision Care



vIVid Life Spa, Favorite Place for Cosmetic Services.



Iowa Hearing Center, Favorite Warren County Hearing Center



Jon Niemeyer, Favorite Warren County Realtor



Warren Lawn Services, Favorite Warren County Lawn Care Business



Michael Foods at the Norwalk 4th of July Parade.



Providence Christian School at the Norwalk 4th of July Parade.



Custom Electrical Services at the Norwalk 4th of July Parade.



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**Zane Muntz** *Partner | Broker*  
✉ [zane@bphxg.com](mailto:zane@bphxg.com)



**Morgan Cook** *Realtor*  
✉ [morgan@bphxg.com](mailto:morgan@bphxg.com)

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