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WEST DES MOINES
JORDAN CREEK

NOVEMBER 2024

Living

ON THE

Map

**Landmarks add to
West Des Moines'
character**

**Crab and shrimp sushi burrito
RECIPE**

**Honoring those who have served
VETERANS SALUTE**

**Helping combat food insecurity
GOOD NEIGHBOR**



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BINDING generations

Take a left by the old police station. Go three blocks till you come up to the water tower, then head right until you see the bear statue. Go past that for another block and turn left at the corner with the big rock. Then you will find what you are looking for, right next to where the old grocery store used to be.

Sound familiar? If you have ever asked for directions from someone who lived in a town for a long time, you likely heard something like that.

I worked at a gas station in high school, and a day rarely went by when people didn't stop in and ask for directions — and they also rarely wrote my instructions down. Either my directions were really simple, or they got lost along the way. I am guessing the latter.

I learned to first ask directions-seekers if they were familiar with the area. If the answer was yes, I could use landmarks as a guide. If the answer was no, I offered street names and my best guess for a number of blocks.

You may know people in town who moved to an older home where the prior owners lived for many decades. The Smith home. The Johnson home. The Jones home. The new owners could live there for 20 years, but many of the locals would still call it by the name of the prior inhabitants. Change is slow for many of us.

When our editor and I discussed a story idea about popular landmarks in the community, we both wondered what we would hear from residents when asked to name a few of the most popular. Parks. Ponds. Monuments. Bridges. Things like these topped the list, but we also heard about some unique landmarks that we guess many have never heard of. In that sense, landmarks are like art, and what defines art is different to every person.

French essayist Joseph Joubert said monuments are the grappling irons that bind one generation to another. I believe this to be true with many other landmarks, too, as they give us a sense of comfort and belonging and identity. And, although many of our central Iowa communities have a great deal in common, these landmarks make each one unique.

In this issue of your Living magazine, we share many of the popular landmarks in town and tell the stories of their relevance to the community. We hope you smile as you recall some of these, and we hope you are also inspired to seek out the others.

Thanks for reading. ■

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ON THE

Map

Landmarks add to
West Des Moines' character

By Jackie Wilson

Art works. Architectural delights. Stunning homes. Monuments. West Des Moines abounds with well-known sights — historic and new — that serve as landmarks and add to the community's character. They catch the eyes of visitors, spark memories in longtime residents, and embed themselves in the minds of those who use them as guideposts as they traverse the town. As street scenes change with the times, the landmarks remain steadfast reminders that West Des Moines is one of a kind. This month's cover story tells the stories of some of the most recognizable landmarks of the city.

The Rogers Family, from left: Cody, Linda, Scott and Quinn Rogers. Right of podium: Lacy Raitt with kids Jackson and Allison. Photo submitted

Historic Valley Junction

The first landmark — Valley Junction — is actually home to not one, but more than a dozen landmarks.

Dr. Vicky Long Hill's ancestors moved to Valley Junction more than 100 years ago. Hill's grandfather came with the railroad, from the Mississippi and Arkansas area. She continues to live in Valley Junction today. Her parents, John and Barbara Long, founded the Eddie Davis Community Center.

One of Valley Junction's most iconic landmarks: the many downtown businesses that have stood the test of time, like Tavern Pizza. The restaurant has been around since 1937. Hill recalls walking downtown from their home.

"We were crazy about the guinea grinders," she recalls. "It still remains a favorite today."

A shoe repair shop is iconic in the area; as is the Lyric Theater. The former theater was built in 1907 and showed movies until 1960. In 1971, it became apartments and a theatrical shop.

Jack Rogers Pavilion

During the summers, Valley Junction hosts a weekly farmers market and concert series, Music in the Junction. Next time you're enjoying



Historic Valley Junction

the music or dancing, take a close look at the plaque. The stage area is called the Jack Rogers Pavilion.

Who is Jack Rogers? According to his youngest son, Matt Rogers, Jack served as West Des Moines' city attorney. He joined the city in 1962 and served under eight mayors and three city managers, resigning at age 64. Family members wanted to name a street after him; however, the city had stopped doing so. Instead, it was suggested to name a structure in his honor.

Jack's legacy was helping draft the city's zoning policy, which lead to office parks that

required a set amount of green space. Billboards were only allowed a certain height to keep up with city aesthetics.

Matt says the pavilion honored a man who was mindful, not only of quantity, but quality, and helped West Des Moines grow into the town it is today.

"He had the best intentions for the city. He would come home late from city meetings for 33 years with one goal in mind: to make West Des Moines a growth community while keeping it functional, viable and attractive at the same time."

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Phenix Elementary

In the Valley Junction area, an iconic elementary school was built in 1939. In 1955, it was renamed for Phenix teacher and principal Nellie Phenix. The school closed in 2014 and was renovated into apartments in 2018.

Taste of the Junction

The popular festival, Taste of the Junction, became important to the area as multiple cultures converged. Hill explains that her African American community, along those of Hispanic heritage, moved north of the railroad tracks. The area was a slower place of living.

“It was a homogenous and diverse neighborhood before it was vogue to be diverse,” Hill says. “Caucasians, Hispanics, African Americans — we got all the best in our neighborhood.”

Taste of the Junction began when neighbors hosted parties. Hill’s grandfather, Alonzo Page, was known for his barbecue and owned Bluejays BBQ. Communities shared food.

“The Hispanic families cooked enchiladas and tacos, and my grandparents gave BBQ,” Hill recalls.

Jordan House

The Jordan House, located at 2001 Fuller Road, will celebrate its 175th birthday next year.

Gale Brubaker is the executive director of the West Des Moines Historical Society and a fierce advocate of the Jordan House, where her office is housed.

The Jordan House was the home of James Jordan, an early settler in the West Des Moines area. A frequent stop for the underground railroad, slaves known as “freedom seekers” often sought refuge in the Jordan House. Brubaker says that abolitionist John Brown stayed on the property with his own groups of freedom seekers on the way to Canada.

“We’re walking in the footsteps of history right here,” Brubaker says as she gestures to her surroundings.

The Jordan House was designated as a historic landmark, and the West Des Moines Historical Society formed in 1970 helped to save the Jordan House. Tours began in the 1980s and continue today. The tours continue telling the stories of slavery and those who came to the house seeking refuge.

Soon to come is a new phase of the Jordan House property, include Legacy Woods (a prairie



Gale Brubaker, executive director of the West Des Moines Historical Society, stands inside the historic Jordan House. Photo by Jackie Wilson

restoration), historic campus and moving the Bennett School to Legacy Woods.

Brubaker is passionate about keeping history alive and promoting and preserving West Des Moines and Valley Junction history.

“We wish more people understand what this building is and the message it means,” she says. “It’s not just an old house that smells like your grandma’s. It’s living, breathing history.”

What is sweeter than gingerbread, nicer than blood donors, and spicier than hot cocoa?

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When you donate with LifeServe Blood Center, you're doing more than giving blood – you're giving hope to local patients in need. **Your donation directly supports Des Moines area hospitals, helping ensure a steady blood supply during the busiest time of the year.** This winter, as a special thank you, we're offering our 5th Annual Collector's Edition Ugly Sweater shirt at select blood drives! It's our coziest and most festive design yet – and you can get it for free when you donate at special drives, or purchase it through our online donor store (while supplies last).

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Cemetery in the middle of the road

Driving west of Jordan Creek Mall, reveals a plethora of new construction, housing, retail and more.

For dozens of years, when drivers came to an intersection off Mills Civic Parkway and what is now 88th Street, there wasn't a crosswalk or building — there was a cemetery.

The Huston Cemetery was established in 1847 and named after the Huston family who settled in West Des Moines. Proponents of the landmark didn't want to disturb the deceased and balked when city planners wanted to dig up the cemetery as only 19 headstones remained.

As cars often crashed into the cemetery, city planners eventually expanded Mills Civic Parkway and rerouted the road at a cost of \$7.2 million. Today, the cemetery offers space for parking.

Brubaker says freedom seekers may be buried there without headstones.

City campus

One fairly new landmark to West Des Moines is the city campus. The area includes two schools, the Learning Resource Center, a football stadium, city hall, the library, a pond and a walking path. In 2020, the Jamie Hurd Amphitheater's open-air venue began offering concerts and other events.

Artwork dots the campus and trails. The latest artwork is "Progression" by artist Douwe Blumberg, consisting of 29 different sized metal spheres. The round objects begin in the prairie grass and appear rusted or old.

The rusty part mimics how West Des Moines started out as a rough and tumble city and progressed to shiny and new, which reflects what the city is today.



Folded Flags

Folded flags on Veterans Parkway

In 2019, the city installed a Folded Flags display along Veterans Parkway. These flags aren't the traditional fabric flapping in the wind. Instead, the 15 blue flags with white stars are sturdy structures that light up at night.

The sculptures take the shape of folded traditional flags. In military settings, a



Vicky Long Hill stands in front of the Eddie Davis Community Center, which was established in 1999 by her parents, John and Barbara Long. Hill's ancestors came to Valley Junction more than 100 years ago. Photo by Jackie Wilson

traditional flag is folded 13 times and symbolizes a veteran's service to the country or honors service members who have died. The flags were created in collaborate with Shive Hattery.

Raccoon River Park

A former sand and gravel mine transformed into one of West Des Moines's greatest treasures: Raccoon River Park. In 1994, construction first established Blue Heron Lake, walking paths, a playground, ball fields, nature lodge, boathouse and more.

Nearing completion this fall is a pedestrian bridge connecting the Raccoon River Park and Walnut Woods State Park.

Valley West Mall

Although retail stores have come and gone at Valley West Mall, many West Des Moines residents recall having their first shopping experience at this mall that opened in 1975. Baby Boomers and Gen X-ers alike cherish memories of hanging out with their friends, shopping and eating at the food court.

Valley High School

Hill attended ninth grade at the old Valley High School formerly located at Eighth Street, on the current Hillside Elementary school property. She recalls moving into the new school, where she graduated in 1972.

Bennett School Museum

The Bennett School, built in 1926 or 1927, was one of the last one-room schools to be built in West Des Moines. It was in use until 1941 and is located at 4001 Fuller Road next to Jordan Creek Elementary School.



Val Air Ballroom

Val Air Ballroom

The Val Air, an 80-year-old iconic ballroom, was home to ballroom dancing, live shows and concerts. Valley High school students recall having prom in the ballroom, located at 301 Ashworth Road. Many longtime residents of West Des Moines have fond memories about past concerts they attended as teenagers or when they went dancing.

Due to noise complaints, Val Air shut down temporarily, but a \$15 million renovation was completed in early 2024. Local music lovers and concertgoers have enthusiastically embraced the newly remodeled venue.

Other landmarks

On a Facebook forum, more than 200 folks with West Des Moines ties shared other landmark favorites. McLaren's Resthaven Cemetery has been a mainstay for decades. The Chocolate Storybook on Grand is a longtime favorite shop for sweets. An old dairy farm home at 3901 Ashworth Road remains today. Skate West, a former youth hangout, is now the Tallgrass Theatre. ■

HOW TO help your aging parents

Adult children of aging parents can face many challenges. A gradual decline in health, a sudden health emergency or a new diagnosis can thrust you into becoming a caregiver for your parents. If your aging parents need help to remain safe and healthy, you can take steps to manage the situation.



Know their values

Have a frank and honest conversation with your family. Make sure that you understand and acknowledge their wishes. Do your parents want to age in their own home? Are they capable of doing so, both financially and physically? Is it time to downsize? Is there a plan in place for when your parent cannot make decisions? Together, you can make a list of values and goals and then work together to accomplish them.

Know their assets

Keep a list of assets, such as real estate, bank accounts and investments. This includes life insurance policies, long-term care insurance, IRAs, 401(k) plans, annuities and money market accounts. This list also needs to account for income from Social Security retirement benefits and other sources, like pensions or the required minimum distributions from investments.

Execute key documents

Develop a plan for having key legal documents in place. If you parents have never executed these documents (or if they are out of date), it is critical to prepare and revise new ones. Ignoring this issue will only lead to bigger problems.

A last will and testament controls the disposition of assets and nominates an executor to wrap up final affairs. A revocable living trust

can supplement a will by naming a trustee who will distribute certain assets. Unlike a will, a trust doesn't go through court-supervised probate. This can save time and money when settling an estate.

A durable power of attorney for health care nominates an agent to make medical decisions. A living will is the document that tells that agent what decisions to make. A financial power of attorney gives an agent the ability to manage assets. These three separate documents are key to allowing you to better handle your parents' affairs.

Caring for your aging parents and providing for your family at the same time can be emotionally overwhelming. Talk with an experienced elder law attorney to help you navigate these dramatic changes. ■

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

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COMMITTED to staying in your home, but need some help?

Maria, 76, is committed to remaining in her home as she ages. She recently experienced some health issues, though, and is afraid her adult children will try to persuade her to move to a senior living community.

Maria's challenge isn't unusual, as staying in our homes as we age is not always possible. Chronic health challenges can make living independently ill-advised, and full-time care at home can be expensive.

You may be asking yourself, then: "If I don't want to move into a community but my family and I are concerned about health issues later on, what can I do?"

The answer may lie in a Continuing Care at Home (CC@H) membership initiative, a program usually administered by an organization that serves older adults. CC@H programs are designed to help people proactively focus on their health at home while enabling them to financially plan for potential services and care down the road.

If you're interested in looking into a CC@H program, make sure to ask specifically what the program includes. A reputable CC@H program not only will offer services to enhance your well-being so you can remain



independent longer; it will also help fund future long-term care needs.

You'll also want to ask:

- **Does the program feature personal support, such as wellness coaching?** Studies show people who embark on a life-enriching program or activity will be more likely to succeed with encouragement from a trusted adviser or advocate.
- **Does it include care costs and options?** A solid program will help fund your care, if it's needed, whether through home healthcare or services in a senior living community later on. If the program you're considering does offer both, make sure you're comfortable with the services and care provided by the organization's home healthcare team as well as in its communities. A reputable provider will have longevity and solid outcomes behind it.

Not all CC@H programs are created equal. If a program appeals to you, make sure it meets both your current and future needs and provides you with peace of mind. Your well-being and your checkbook will thank you for it. ■

Aaron Wheeler is Vice President of Home and Community-Based Services for WesleyLife, which provides health and well-being services, including WellAhead — A WesleyLife Well-Being Experience, a CC@H offering. To learn more, visit wesleylife.org/wellahead.

RECIPE

BRING the taste of takeout home

(Family Features) Some nights, especially when schedules are jam packed, the allure of grabbing takeout or swinging through a drive-thru between activities may sound more appealing than spending time in the kitchen. You can skip the to-go boxes, however, with these tasty Asian-inspired dishes that come together almost as fast as delivery while allowing you to get creative at mealtime.

Packed with fresh shrimp and crispy veggies, this crab and shrimp sushi burrito fuses some favorite takeout dishes together to satisfy cravings in half an hour. Using Success Boil-in-Bag Jasmine Rice, which cooks up soft and fluffy, provides a flavorful and aromatic base. This combination of seafood, homemade sauces and flavorful veggies makes for an unforgettable taste experience comparable to your favorite quick-serve restaurant.

Find more recipe inspiration to tackle takeout cravings and more at SuccessRice.com. ■

Crab and shrimp sushi burrito

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Servings: 4

- 1 bag Success Jasmine Rice
- 1/2 cup unseasoned rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 tablespoons Sriracha sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon black sesame seeds
- 4 sushi nori sheets
- 1/2 carrot, ribboned, divided
- 1/2 cucumber, ribboned, divided
- 6 crab sticks, shredded, divided
- 6 large shrimp, cooked, deveined, tails removed and butterflied, divided

DIRECTIONS

- Rinse rice bag under cold water to remove starch. Prepare rice according to package directions.
- In small saucepan over medium-low heat, heat rice vinegar, sugar and salt until sugar and salt have dissolved, about 1 minute. Set aside.
- In small bowl, mix mayonnaise, Sriracha sauce and sesame oil. Set aside.



- Transfer cooked rice onto large baking sheet. Drizzle half the vinegar mixture over rice, turning until all rice is fully coated. Taste and add more vinegar mixture, if desired. Spread rice into thin layer and cool to room temperature. Sprinkle sesame seeds on top.
- Lay down one sushi nori sheet. Spread layer of rice on it. Place half the carrots and cucumbers on rice. Place crab and shrimp on top.
- Place another sushi nori sheet just under first one and roll. Repeat with remaining sushi nori sheets, rice, carrots, cucumbers, crab and shrimp. Wrap both burritos in plastic wrap. Let rest 10 minutes.
- Slice burritos in half and serve with spicy mayo.

Locally owned

WEST DES MOINES

West Des Moines - Jordan Creek Living magazine salutes locally owned businesses. When you patronize these establishments, you are greeted by neighbors and friends — people who live in the community and invest in their livelihood here. They support local causes, are involved in area activities, and are dedicated to the success of the the town they live in. And, more of the money you spend at locally owned businesses stays in the community. Thank you, local business owners, for helping to make the community a wonderful place to live.

Photo by
Jackie Wilson



CBD AMERICAN SHAMAN

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As a U.S. Air Force veteran, opening CBD American Shaman stores in Altoona and West Des Moines was a personal mission to bring real relief to my community. My husband, Jason, served as a Marine machine gunner in Iraq and Afghanistan, facing battles that left him with deep survivor's guilt and PTSD. After years of unsuccessful treatments through the VA, everything changed when he tried CBD. It gave him lasting relief without side effects or additional medications.

Seeing how much CBD helped Jason inspired me to share it with others. During the isolation of the pandemic, I realized my purpose was to bring relief and healing to people like us.

After researching companies, I chose American Shaman for their high-quality products and dedication to wellness.

Now, our stores offer not only CBD but also THC, mushrooms and alkaloids — each with unique health benefits. These natural options allow us to address a wide range of needs, from stress relief to mental clarity and physical support.

Every day, I'm grateful to help people find balance and relief through these products. Our stores are more than retail spaces; they're places for hope, healing, and support on the journey to wellness.

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BURCH AUTO REPAIR

OWNER: Joe Burch

ADDRESS: 1021 Railroad Ave., West Des Moines

PHONE: 515-505-8483

WEBSITE: BurchAutoRepair.com

Becoming a 25-year-old small business owner right here in Valley Junction has been an incredible journey. While I opened Burch Auto Repair in Valley Junction in 2019 at the age of 20, I started this journey at a much younger age, believe it or not. Growing up with a single mother and three sisters, we had little to spare. Though I hadn't set out to start a business, seeing my mother's struggle to find an honest mechanic, I realized I could provide that for her — and for others. Even as my business grows, I remain passionate and committed to ensuring that the people in my community have a dependable, trustworthy mechanic.

After leaving high school at 16, I discovered I excelled at repairing things. I went to work at a small repair shop, where I saw the value of honesty in this trade. That experience shifted my focus; I was going to start fixing cars in my mom's driveway not only for family, but for others. I turned her one car garage into a workspace and started working on as many cars as I could fit. While it was small and informal, it was the beginning of my business. I honed my skills, formed lasting connections, and broadened my horizons. At 19, a mentor helped me secure a property in Valley Junction where my family has lived for generations.

Burch Auto Repair opened for business in August 2019. We started small — me, a small toolbox, and a few hand-me-down pieces of equipment from the previous tenant. I believed that if I remained true to my principles, the community would see the value in what I was offering.

Over the next 4 years we doubled in size, expanded our services to be a one-stop shop, and I have a wonderful team that meets the standards I believe in — while genuinely sharing that commitment individually. As we continue to grow, we will work hard to expand our skills, knowledge, and equipment to stay up to date on technology, which continues to advance faster than ever. Burch Auto Repair is recognized as a certified service center, which allows us to offer a nationwide warranty to put everyone at ease during the upcoming holiday travel — even if you need a loaner car.

I am not only passionate about cars; I'm committed to the people in our small community having a local service center they trust to handle all their vehicle needs from tires and oil changes, to major repairs when the unthinkable happens. When you need my shop, we will take care of you in a way only a small business can; in a personalized, safe, and genuine setting. We strive to build a relationship you can lean on for service, advice, or even just to stop in to pet the cat and say hello. When you leave you will know you and your family are safe on the road.





Rick A. Wagaman, MS
HW Premium CBD, Health Educator & Advocate for the
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If you're looking to improve your health and wellness, HW Premium CBD + Nutrition is here to guide you. Proudly based in Iowa, we combine premium CBD products, nutritional supplements, and a commitment to education, making us the preferred choice for Iowans seeking natural wellness solutions.

Why HW Premium CBD Stands Out in Iowa's Market

As a locally owned, family-run business, HW Premium CBD + Nutrition is set apart by our deep roots and dedication to the Iowa community. With over a decade in the CBD industry, our founders have played key roles in advancing Iowa's CBD sector, advocating for safe, effective hemp-derived products. We emphasize not only quality but also education, empowering our customers to understand the potential of cannabinoids on their wellness journeys. At HW CBD, we believe in the transformative benefits of cannabinoids and aim to help our customers enhance their health.

Tailored Wellness Solutions

Our CBD products address everyday health concerns. Whether you need relief from pain, support for sleep, or a natural way to manage stress, HW Premium CBD + Nutrition offers solutions crafted for balance and well-being. We also offer products targeted for energy, blood pressure, and general wellness, allowing customers to find what suits their needs best.

A Legal, Trustworthy Choice for Iowans

Understanding CBD's legal landscape can be challenging, but we make it easy for our customers. HW Premium CBD + Nutrition ensures all products are compliant with state regulations, safe, and fully legal. Our team is knowledgeable about legal requirements and dedicated to providing a transparent experience for our customers.

Experience and Education at the Core

Education is central to HW Premium CBD + Nutrition. For those new to CBD, our knowledgeable team is ready to answer questions and provide guidance. We foster a welcoming environment where customers can confidently explore wellness options. Beyond selling products, we're committed to supporting your health journey with evidence-based advice and personalized recommendations.

Holistic Nutrition and Functional Mushrooms

In addition to our CBD offerings, HW Premium CBD + Nutrition provides high-quality nutritional supplements from 1st Phorm. These supplements compliment CBD by enhancing wellness further. Also our line of functional mushrooms support a balanced lifestyle, providing benefits such as immune support, improved focus, and stress resilience.

Your One-Stop Wellness Shop

With premium CBD, superior nutritional supplements, and functional mushrooms, HW CBD + Nutrition takes a holistic approach to wellness. By merging top-quality products with expert guidance, we empower Iowans to take control of their health naturally. Visit us today to discover why we're Iowa's top choice for CBD and wellness, and let us help you on your path to a healthier life.



HELPING combat food insecurity

St. Mark Neighborhood Fridge provides food for those in need.

The mission of the St. Mark Neighborhood Fridge is short and sweet, but it's one of massive impact: "Feed our neighbors. Reduce food waste."



Since opening this past June, the fridge has done exactly that.

The St. Mark Neighborhood Fridge is a ministry of St. Mark Lutheran Church at 1115 Grand Avenue. The fridge is located in the church's Discipleship Center, directly across the parking lot.

"Our prayer is that good food ends up in the hands of people who need it," Pastor Bob Bekkerus says.

And so far, that prayer is being realized.

The idea for the St. Mark Neighborhood Fridge had been in the minds of church members for a while, but it took real shape when Bekkerus and his team noticed the rising demand for immediate food assistance in their community.

The St. Mark team, including team leader Mark Kallenbach and Denise Wieland, who has been part of the initiative since its inception a year and a half ago, quickly embraced the vision. After hearing about community fridges springing up across the city to rescue food that would otherwise go to waste, they recognized the opportunity to make an impact right on their property.

With three schools within walking distance and many neighbors feeling the financial strain of rising grocery costs, a local community fridge felt like a meaningful solution.

St. Mark Lutheran Church officially opened its community fridge in June after securing a suitable location and navigating logistical challenges. Thanks to grants and generous donations from the congregation, the team successfully brought the project to life.

"This has really been a congregation-driven project," Wieland says.

The response from the neighborhood has been nothing short of overwhelming. There's a steady stream of people relying on the fridge to get through tough times. An estimated 70 to 80 people access the fridge weekly, an indicator of its importance in this particular neighborhood.

To keep the fridge stocked, the church has partnered with local stores like Hy-Vee and Fareway, area caterers and individuals who donate surplus food. Food rescue has become a core element of the initiative, as volunteers retrieve unsold or unused food from caterers, local businesses and even other churches.

Sacred Heart Church donates leftovers from funerals, and Des Moines Christian School offers leftover meals from school lunches. Even items like salmon or meat, prized donations due to the scarcity of protein.

The community fridge is open 24/7, offering convenience to both donors and recipients. Families have used this as a teaching moment, involving children or grandchildren in shopping for food donations and demonstrating the power of giving.

"From a congregation perspective, it's also been overwhelming in the number of people who are volunteering to help," Kallenbach adds.

Volunteers joyfully collect donations and break them down for repackaging, allowing for a personal touch and creating a community-centered social experience.

"It's amazing the number of people who are chomping at the bit to go



Ryan Mehalovich of Edward Jones presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Mark Kallenbach and Pastor Bob Bekkerus.

pick up food, because it's so satisfying to take something that will feed someone that otherwise would have gone in the trash and get it into our fridge to where within a day, it's typically consumed," Kallenbach says.

To learn more or to inquire how to donate, email stmarkwdm@gmail.com or call or text 515-635-4962. ■

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EDUCATION

By Jackie Wilson

MEET Jen Flug

Dual language teacher

Western Hills Elementary School offers a unique teaching model: the dual language Spanish immersion class, taught by educator Jen Flug.

The 50/50 model is where 50% of the class is taught in Spanish, while the other 50% is taught in English. Flug teaches subjects, such as reading and writing, in both languages.

"We speak almost all in Spanish until the bell rings. Then it's English the rest of the day," she explains.

The music and art sections count as English minutes. All students are encouraged to speak in whatever language she's teaching at the time.

The background of most students vary; however, the class includes native Spanish speaking students, plus those with other language backgrounds.

This is Flug's sixth year teaching dual language classes at Western Hills. However, she's taught for more than 20 years, anywhere from 3-year-olds to high school students.

Flug knew early on that she wanted to be a teacher. Her interest in learning and speaking Spanish started in third grade. Throughout elementary, junior high and high school at West Des Moines schools, she took Spanish classes. She did a short study abroad in Mexico as a high school student. In college, she studied in Granada, Spain. She obtained a degree in education and Spanish.

"I loved learning about the Spanish language and cultures involved. When the position opened up at Western Hills, I was excited. It's a dream job," she says.

During classes, there's various strategies for learning language, including repetition.

"We provide lots of opportunities to practice speaking, listening, reading and writing in both languages."

She uses songs for them to practice, along with providing pictures. Another method she uses to make education fun is game-like learning.

"Usually, dual language classes are noisier. Lots of students are talking, but that's how they practice and learn."

The students stay together through the rest of the grades, starting in kindergarten. The kids connect with other families.

"I love that we're a little family and a tight-knit group," she says. "We help each other out."

Students who are bilingual obtain many lifelong skills.

"Multilingual is like a super power. We have students who help families with travel. Elementary students help out their parents and other adults," she explains.

She's shared her love of Spanish with her three sons, who all took Spanish in college. Growing up in the West Des Moines school district, she was excited to give back to the community she grew up in.

Flug enjoys watching her students' skills develop.

"It's super rewarding. There's nothing like seeing the lightbulb go on and their smiles light up when they learn something new. It opens up a new world for them." ■



This is Jen Flug's sixth year teaching dual language classes at Western Hills Elementary School.

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BOB KOLLMORGEN

West Des Moines

Military branch: U.S. Coast Guard

Rank: Lieutenant Commander

Service: Two years in the Vietnam Crisis

How can Americans best honor veterans: "More exposure to the public. Veterans should get out there and be seen so people know what the military does."

STEVEN HINDMAN

West Des Moines

Military branch: U.S. Army

Rank: MOS 63B20 truck mechanic

Service: 1968-1969

How can Americans best honor veterans: "Treat our United States flag with the respect it deserves. Many heroes gave their life for the freedom we all have today. When you see a veteran, just say thanks for your service, it means so much to us."



BILL C. BRANTLEY

West Des Moines

Military branch: Army (Artillery)

Rank: Captain • **Service:** 1958-1965

How can Americans best honor our veterans: "Educate your kids and grandkids that it is an honor to serve in the military to preserve our freedom."



CARL LARSON

West Des Moines

Military branch: Army • **Rank:** Private First Class

Service: 1945-1946

How can Americans best honor our veterans: "Wear a flag pin on Veteran's Day and thank a veteran for their service."



ERIC MOORMAN

Carlisle; Post Commander VFW Post 8879 in West Des Moines

Military branch: Marine Corps; Stationed Okinawa Japan; Deployed to Philippines; Stationed Camp Lejeune NC; Deployed Gulf War Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq

Rank: Sergeant • **Service:** 1986-1992


How can Americans best honor veterans: "Support any veteran organization with your volunteer time or a donation."



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PLAN AHEAD By Buffy Peters

GRIEF and the holidays

After someone you love dies, special days like birthdays, anniversaries and holidays can result in what seems like a sudden wave of grief. But it makes a lot of sense. The holidays typically represent togetherness, emphasizing the one who isn't there. Traditions can bring up memories from past holidays, which may now feel painful. And the impossible expectations to have the "perfect" holiday season can leave you feeling as if there is no room for grief during this time of year.



Here is an important reminder: Allow yourself to feel however you are feeling, and make a plan for the days/situations that will be toughest for you.

When making that plan, consider these questions for yourself and those you care about:

What are the things you still want to do and the things you do not? Are there new things you want to try? Everyone grieves differently, so what is comforting to one might not be to another. Is there a way to meet in the middle? Are there others who could aid in making important things happen that you don't have the energy for?

How can you remember and honor your loved one during this season? What is meaningful to you? What was meaningful to them? How can you still incorporate them in new ways?

For more ideas, contact the Academy. Take good care of yourself. ■

Information provided by Buffy Peters, Director of Hamilton's Academy of Grief & Loss, 3601 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-697-3666.

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WELLNESS By Kristen Shelton

HOW TO enhance your skin

Aesthetic treatments play a crucial role in combating visible effects of aging and improving overall skin health. As we age, collagen production decreases, leading to fine lines, wrinkles and volume loss in areas such as the cheeks, temples and jawline. Fortunately, there are several non-invasive and minimally invasive treatments that can help restore a youthful appearance and enhance skin quality.



One of the most common aesthetic treatments is Botox, which relaxes muscles to reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. Dermal fillers, on the other hand, restore volume to areas of the face which have lost elasticity over time, such as the cheeks, chin and jawline, or enhance those gorgeous lips.

Sculptra, a popular regenerative aesthetic treatment, stimulates collagen production to gradually restore volume and reduce fine lines. Sculptra works best over time and provides long-lasting, natural-looking, glowing results. Additional treatments, such as chemical peels, are effective at removing dead skin cells, hyperpigmentation, evening out skin tone, addressing texture concerns such as acne scars, and improving overall brightness of the skin.

In addition, facials, such as the OxyVERVE treatment, are great for hydrating and exfoliating, improving skin texture, boosting hydration and enhancing overall skin health. These treatments not only enhance appearance, but also promote skin rejuvenation by stimulating collagen production, increasing cell turnover and providing a healthy glow. ■

Information provided by Kristen Shelton, RN, BSN, Vivid Wellness Lounge, 1980 N.W. 94th St., Suite E/F, Clive, Livin-Vivid.com 515-415-1550

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Make your voice be heard and cast your votes in the 2024 Dallas County Residents' Choice Poll. This contest is being hosted by Iowa Living magazines, and the results will publish January in Waukee, and February in Adel and West Des Moines - Jordan Creek editions. You can vote in one or every category, or anywhere in between.

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See rules and vote at www.iowalivingmagazines.com/residentpoll.
One vote per resident, please.

FOOD AND DRINK

- Restaurant
- Restaurant for Breakfast
- Restaurant for Lunch
- Restaurant for Dinner
- Restaurant for Dessert
- Place for Ice Cream
- Pizza Establishment
- Bar
- Coffee Shop
- Catering Company
- Server/Bartender

AUTOMOTIVE

- Auto Service
- Auto Body Shop
- Car Dealership

COMMUNITY

- Preschool/Daycare
- Nonprofit
- School (name of building)
- Park
- Community Festival or Event
- Church
- Pastor
- Chamber of Commerce
- Library
- Camping Spot

SHOPPING

- Grocery Store
- Boutique
- Retail Store
- Thrift Store
- Home Improvement Retail Store
- Liquor Store
- Nursery or Garden Center
- Place to Purchase a Gift for a Man
- Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman
- Bakery
- Florist

ENTERTAINMENT

- Dad/Child Date Spot
- Mom/Child Date Spot
- Place to Take Your Mom and Dad
- Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids
- Place for Child's Birthday Party
- Golf Course

HEALTH/BEAUTY

- Hair Salon
- Physicians Clinic
- Dental Office
- Orthodontist Office
- Mental Health Service
- Chiropractic Office
- Audiologist/Hearing Clinic
- Vision Care
- Health Club or Gym

HEALTH/BEAUTY

- CBD Store
- Pharmacy
- Cosmetic Service
- Physical Therapy
- Dance Studio
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- Realtor
- Bank/Credit Union
- Photographer
- Place for Guests to Stay
- Home Builder/Remodeling
- Outdoor Lawn Equipment Store
- Pest Control

MEET Carl Larson

97-year-old WWII veteran details his service.

Carl Larson of West Des Moines is one of about 66,000 living U.S. World War II veterans, out of the 16 million U.S. veterans who served. Larson recalls the day in basic training camp when he was trained to kill. As an 18-year-old, it was a “rude awakening” to grow up quicker than he ever imagined. He shares his World War II experience and stories in this exclusive interview with Iowa Living Magazines.

Larson, 97, sits with his wife, Dixie, at Edgewater, a senior community where he resides in the long-term care unit. Dixie warns he’s “forgetful,” but when her husband speaks about his war experience, he identifies every last detail.

Sitting comfortably in his wheelchair, Larson speaks loudly, clearly and succinctly. He stops and asked if he should slow down talking as he notices my note taking. I assure him that he’s spot on. He begins the story when he was first drafted.

Attending high school in Sioux City, Larson turned in his required draft notice in December 1944, when he turned 18. The government “needed bodies,” and Carl was able to graduate high school mid-year. He recalls obtaining class credits for swimming, instead of PE class, so it could speed up the process to get his diploma and carry out his government obligations.

In 1945, he passed a physical and lined up at Fort Snelling to get his training assignment. Other draftees were ordered to stand in line, where a sergeant pointed out their assignments.

“The first three, he pointed to them — saying, ‘You’re going to the Navy.’ The next two in the Coast Guard. The next five, the Marines. The rest of you are in the Army,” Larson recalls.

He thought he’d like to serve in the Navy; however, he was chosen for the Army. He was warned not to ask to switch or complain.

“The sergeant said, ‘That’s it — you can complain to your congressman to get a different assignment.’ ”

Within two weeks, Larson reported to the federal building in Sioux City, where he and other inductees were directed to a bus and train stop.

“We didn’t know where we were going,” he recalls.

The group ended up at Camp Hood in Texas for 15 weeks of basic training.

“You did what they wanted and couldn’t question it. They put you through the grinder. Everyone lost weight or toned up. It was severe training,” he says.

Rude awakening: learning how to kill

One skill Larson was taught felt unsettling and still bothers him today.

“We learned how to kill. They told us it was self-protection and that we’re here to defeat the enemy — either the Germans or Japanese. It was severe for an 18-year-old. It still makes me sick to my stomach when I think about it. My upbringing in church — the Bible tells us not to kill — so I was at odds with it. But it’s war, so forget about it.”

He completed training with a handful of older men who had reenlisted, who often looked after the younger inductees. At the end of basic training, a furlough offered a return home to his family for one last picnic. The church gave him a book about “How to behave in the Army.” He recalls what the training taught him.



Carl Larson with dogtags and photo of his younger self.

“It was a rude awakening. I never thought about knifing or shooting a person — that’s what it was all about,” he says.

Another training camp in Oregon taught him to “blow up” things. He was processed in California and was instructed to find his number and assignment. He was told he was going on a ship overseas but not the final destination.

Passing Pearl Harbor, it “sunk in” — the war was real

As they sailed the Pacific, they passed by Pearl Harbor, which had been bombed in 1941 and prompted the United States’ entry into the war.

“When the announcers said to look at Pearl Harbor, that’s when it sunk in. This is for real,” Larson recalls.

He was on an attack transport ship, where his troop was instructed to walk down the ramp to the shore, where the water was waist deep.

In the Philippines, they camped and marched to Manila. On the way, locals came out of their homes to watch the soldiers walk past.

“They waved and gave us candy or fruit. Everyone was happy to see us,” he says.

Larson had little contact with his family at home. If he did write

letters, they were warned to be careful.

"Letters will be censored. We don't want to give out any information," Larson says.

As the Japanese surrendered in 1945, he was still stationed on the Philippine island of Luzon. He helped set up a prisoner-of-war camp. Every day, he saw a dump truck unload Japanese soldiers who committed hara-kiri — or suicide — due to their religious beliefs.

"I remember them raising the back of the dump truck and the bodies falling into a shell hole into the ground. They were all emaciated and skinny. It was another rude awakening for an 18-year-old to see the mass burials."

Once, he guarded box cars with items the Filipinos wanted. Inside the box cars were stacks of cloths and fabrics. He noticed people attempting to steal the cotton.

"I fired four shots in a square," he recalls, pointing his finger in four imaginary shots. "I didn't kill anybody, but I got a commendation for that."

Larson later contracted dengue fever, a tropical viral infection spread by mosquitoes, and was admitted to the field hospital in Manila. Meanwhile, his unit was assigned to go to Korea. During battle, his unit suffered many casualties.

"Dengue fever saved my life. Some of my friends didn't make it home," Larson says.

As the war was over, servicemen wanted to return home. However, the military has a point system, regarding when they could go home, based on time spent overseas, combat experience, family or war injuries. He lacked points and was still obligated to serve time, so he was sent to clerical school to learn how to type.

Serving under General MacArthur

Two weeks later, Larson was assigned to General MacArthur's headquarters, known as GHQ, in Tokyo in 1946. Larson typed messages from Washington and handed them to the lieutenant, who took them to the office of MacArthur's — the supreme commander for the Allied Powers.

"I never met him personally, but I saw him many times," he says. "I was there when President Eisenhower visited him."

Larson relays a story about a clerk he worked with. The clerk was talking with another clerk about how his cousin — who was in the military — got a furlough because his parents were ill, and they flew him home.

"The next day the clerk was gone. They got rid of him. You don't say anything about the messages that came in," he explains. "Everything was to remain confidential."

When Larson was ready to return home, his ship cruised near Spokane. He then took the train to Wisconsin, where he visited his sister. Later, he arrived home.

Shortly after his arrival, his family celebrated with a reunion and picnic. A sergeant and two other military officials visited him at his home a few weeks after his return.

"They said, 'We're here to offer you a position from private to corporal. You'll get a raise if you reenlist,'" he says.

"I said, 'No way,'" he explains, shaking his head and waving his arms, as to shoo away the memory. "I'm going to college instead."

At the end of the war, Larson received several awards, including a



Carl Larson in front of GHQ on June 26, 1946.

victory medal, good conduct medal and Asiatic-Pacific Campaign medal.

After his service, Larson attended college on the GI Bill. He obtained a bachelor's degree at St. Peter's in Minneapolis, a master's degree at South Dakota in Vermillion and a doctorate degree from the University of South Dakota in education. He served as a long-time teacher, professor and assistant superintendent, as well as on a college board of directors.

He cherishes time with his family — one son, one daughter and four grandkids — along with his wife Dixie's two children and her grandkids.

Larson says the biggest lesson he learned from the service was to not overvalue or undervalue life.

"Study hard before you jump in," he says. "The service taught me what it is to be a scholar. I took advantage and went to school on a GI Bill."

As folks frequently question him about his service, many ask how many times he fired his rifle.

"I said only four — when I was guarding the box car," he recalls. "I was one of the lucky ones."

As we end the interview, Larson thanks me for listening. I thank him for telling his story and for his brave service protecting our freedoms.

He replies, "I don't think I did much. I wasn't in combat and didn't think my service mattered."

Most definitely it did. Every serviceperson's job mattered. Carl Larson mattered. Thank you again, Carl, for your dedicated service. ■

WDM CHAMBER launches new foundation on 100-year anniversary

The West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce (WDM Chamber) announced the launch of the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce Foundation (WDM Chamber Foundation) at a ribbon cutting on Nov. 12 at the WDM Chamber office. The new foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to addressing community and regional needs in innovative ways and is one of 10 special initiatives celebrating the WDM Chamber's 100-year anniversary, marking a significant milestone in its commitment to serving the community.

The WDM Chamber Foundation's mission is to collaborate with area business leaders and key stakeholders to solve community problems, create opportunities and support the thriving future of West Des Moines. With a focus on workforce development, economic prosperity and civic engagement, the Foundation aims to position West Des Moines as the best place in America to live, work and play.

"I am so proud of our stellar Board of Trustees, who have worked hard to build our new foundation as a vital asset for our community and region," said Katherine Harrington, president and CEO of the WDM Chamber Foundation. "As a special way to spotlight the West Des Moines Chamber's 100-year anniversary, we are excited about serving the needs of our community for the next 100 years."

Chris Nelson, chair of the WDM Chamber Foundation, added, "I have been involved in the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce for many years, and it is an honor to be serving in this capacity. As we continue to position the city of West Des Moines as the best in America to live, work and play, it will be critical to position the Foundation for success for our area's positive future and fill needs in the community."

In addition to the formation of the WDM Chamber Foundation, the WDM Chamber announced that Harrington has been named president of the WDM Chamber Foundation. Harrington will continue to serve as the president and CEO of the WDM Chamber while also leading the WDM Chamber Foundation.

The WDM Chamber Foundation is poised to become the premier nonprofit organization in the region, fostering innovation and addressing community needs. This new venture underscores the chamber's commitment to the city of West Des Moines and the greater Des Moines region, ensuring a prosperous and thriving future for all.

For more information about the WDM Chamber Foundation, visit wdmchamber.org/wdm-chamber-foundation. ■

EXPLORE exciting WDM Library databases

The Library has much more to offer than just the physical books inside our building. We'd like to highlight some of our databases and resources you might not be aware that we have. View them all by visiting wdmlibrary.org/digital-library.

• **ABCmouse.com:** Online, interactive curriculum for children ages 2 to 8+, including reading and language arts, math, beginning science, social studies, art and music.



• **Brainfuse:** Specialized Adult Learning Center — GED, resume help, live coaching, practice tests and more.



• **Learning Express:** Do practice tests on a wide variety of skills: SAT, ACT (college prep), civil service, postal, AP tests, general skills, elementary and middle school skills, real estate and more.



• **Points of View Reference Center:** Provides a balance of materials from all viewpoints with main essays, leading political magazines from all areas on the political spectrum, newspapers, radio and television news transcripts, primary source documents and reference books.



• **Transparent Language Online:** Personal language-learning system that uses a multi-format process for learning more than 110 languages.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Registration for November events is now open. Remember that the library will have closures for the Thanksgiving Holiday. We will close at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 27 and will be closed all day on Thursday and Friday. We reopen with regular hours on Saturday, Nov. 30.

Iowa Files: Woodland Cemetery (adults) Sunday, Nov. 17, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Volunteers Mary Christopher and Mike Rowley share fascinating stories of the departed residents of Woodland Cemetery in Des Moines. No registration.

Final Friday Fiber Club (adults) Friday, Nov. 22, 10-11:30 a.m.

All fiber artists are invited to join us for Final Friday Fiber Club, an informal opportunity to get together with other fiber artists to make new friends while creating your own handmade masterpieces. Registration required.

Music by Serenade (all ages) Sunday, Nov. 24, 3-4 p.m.

The Library is very happy to welcome Serenade for an afternoon of enchanting music. Featuring the unique musical pairing of Denise Schmitz and Tim Cooper, Serenade will perform beautiful ballads and more. ■

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FORMER DMACC students receive DMACC Alumni Association awards

Eight former Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) students were recently recognized in a special dinner and ceremony hosted by the DMACC Alumni Association at the DMACC Ankeny Campus.

Five former students earned Outstanding Alumni Awards, the highest honor given to DMACC alumni by the DMACC Alumni Association. This award honors and recognizes alumni who provide service to their community, country and/or fellow citizen; have had great professional or personal achievement since graduation; and continue to be involved in the life and work of DMACC. Recipients include:

- **Kimberly Brix**, DMACC Ankeny Campus, diploma in architectural drafting, 1999 and AAS in Architectural Technologies, 2003; lead engineering technician at Snyder & Associates in Ankeny. Brix lives in Ankeny.

- **Clint Dudley**, DMACC Ankeny Campus, AAS in Auto Mechanics Technology, 1999; owner of Shade Tree Auto. Dudley lives in West Des Moines.

- **Matthew Stephenson**, DMACC Ankeny Campus, Liberal Arts, 2002; director of learning and development at Casey's. Stephenson lives in Ankeny.

In addition, two recent DMACC graduates received an Alumni Early Achievement Award. The award was created in 2011 to recognize alumni who have graduated from DMACC within the last 10 years and have displayed exemplary personal or professional achievement or volunteer service to their community. Those recipients include:

- **Meghanne Knight**, DMACC Ankeny Campus, Biotechnology, 2018; equipment maintenance specialist at Eurofins Nutritional Analysis Center in Ankeny. Knight lives in Ankeny.

In addition, a former Urban Campus student who is a dedicated community leader and public servant with a career marked by a strong commitment to social justice, education and community developed, received a DMACC Impact Award from the Alumni Association. ■



Kimberly Brix



Clint Dudley



Matthew Stephenson



Meghanne Knight

WDM CHAMBER now accepting nominations for 2025 Citizen and Emerging Citizen of the Year awards

The West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce (WDM Chamber) announced the annual West Des Moines Citizen and Emerging Citizen of the Year nominations are now open through Jan. 15, 2025.

"This award celebrates the remarkable contributions of our Citizen of the Year, whose impact resonates throughout West Des Moines," says Katherine Harrington, president and CEO of the WDM Chamber. "As we mark the WDM Chamber's Annual Dinner in 2025, we take special pride in honoring those who make our community stronger and more vibrant every day."

Over the last decade, many people who have made a positive difference in the community have been awarded including: 2017, David Maxwell and Mark Hillenbrand, Collin Nelson (Emerging); 2018, Tim Miller, JJ Kapur (Emerging); 2019, Mary and Milford Cole-Duvall, Nick Brannen (Emerging); 2020, Jim Sandager and Kate Banasiak (Emerging); 2021, Sanjita Pradhan and Scott Cutler (Emerging); 2022, Steven and Kent Gaer, Gianna Pugliese (Emerging); 2024 Al Womble and Caitlin Clark (Emerging).

In 2024, Al Womble was recognized as the 79th Citizen of the Year.

"This honor is a testament to the power of community and the impact we can create together. I'm grateful to be part of such a supportive community that truly cares about its people and future. This award isn't just about my journey; it's about everyone who's worked alongside me, inspired me, and encouraged me to make a difference. West Des Moines is a special community, and I am excited for all of us to continue building a brighter future together."

Caitlin Clark was honored as Emerging Citizen of the Year in 2024 and, along with Womble, was celebrated at the WDM Chamber's Annual Dinner and 100-Year Celebration in May 2024.

Both award recipients for 2025 will be honored at the Annual Dinner on March 5 at the Val Air Ballroom. To nominate someone, visit wdmchamber.org/events/citizen-of-the-year. Nominations will close on Wednesday, Jan. 15 at 11:59 p.m.

Those interested in attending the 2025 Annual Dinner can learn more and register by visiting wdmchamber.org/events/annual-dinner. ■

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Check for cancellations

Upcoming in West Des Moines - Jordan Creek Living magazine:



• **Holiday recipes:** Do you have a holiday recipe that has special meaning to you? Will you share it with our readers? Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com by Nov. 15 to have it included in our December issue.



• **First cars:** Do you remember your first car? Do you have a photo of yourself with it? Or maybe you still own it? We want to hear your stories. Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com by Dec. 5 to be included in the January issue.

Deck the Halls of the Jordan House Museum

Does everyone say you have an AMAZING eye for holiday decorating? Be part of living history by decorating a room or hallway at the Jordan House Museum. This is a fun way for a group, club or family to share some holiday joy with visitors this December. Call 515-225-1286 to reserve your room. Visitors will vote on their favorite decorations all December and during our annual tour of the Jordan House and Bennett School, Home for the Holidays.

Home for the Holidays

Saturday, Dec. 7, 1-3 p.m.
Jordan House Museum, 2001 Fuller Road, and Bennett School Museum, 4001 Fuller Road, West Des Moines

Admire the beautiful and unique decorations at the historic Jordan House Museum, vote on your favorite theme and have fun with family-friendly crafts at the Bennett School Museum. Both museums will be open for tours from 1-3 p.m. with special holiday fun for all. Tickets available the day of, or reserve your tickets at westdesmoineshistoricalsociety.ticketspice.com/home-for-the-holidays.



ARL Santa N' Paws

Through Nov. 17
Animal Rescue League of Iowa,
5452 N.E. 22nd St., Des Moines

Bring your humans and your pet for a one-of-a-kind holiday photo for \$10. You don't have to own a pet, or even bring them to participate; holiday photos of any kind are welcome. For more information, visit www.arl-iowa.org/santa.



Best of the West Awards Celebration

Tuesday, Dec. 3, 5-7 p.m.
The Rewind, 6075 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines

Join the Fifth Annual Best of the West Awards Celebration as the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce recognizes its 2024 winners and celebrates 100 years of the WDM Chamber. Tickets are \$45 for WDM Chamber members and \$55 for nonmembers. For more information and a registration link, visit members.wdmchamber.org/events/details/best-of-the-west-awards-celebration-3885?calendarMonth=2024-12-01.

Jingle in the Junction

Thursdays, Nov. 21, Dec. 5, Dec. 12, Dec. 19, 5-8 p.m.
Valley Junction

The holiday season is in Valley Junction as many businesses extend their hours on Thursday nights to give you more time to find the perfect holiday gift, enjoy dinner and enjoy three blocks of free entertainment on Fifth Street under the glow of more than 100,000 holiday lights. Enjoy free horse-drawn trolley rides, ice carvings, photo op, a Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony at 6 p.m. in front of the West Des Moines Fire Administration Headquarters at 318 Fifth St., rotating entertainers, live reindeer, carolers, and Santa and Mrs. Claus at the Historic Valley Junction Foundation office from 6-8 p.m.

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Running of the Reindeer

Saturday, Nov. 30, 8:45-10 a.m.

Valley Junction

Dress up in your best holiday costume and kick off Small Business Saturday with a three-block fun run in Historic Valley Junction. Run, walk, crawl — we don't care. Only one

prize is given for speed, the other two are given for creativity. Bring the whole family. There is no entry fee for this race, and all ages are welcome. At 8:45 a.m., lineup starts at Fifth and Walnut in front of St. Kilda at 333 Fifth St. Race starts at 8 a.m. with a \$100 cash prize each for race winner, best adult costume and best children's costume. Most shops open at 10 a.m. for Small Business Saturday with some restaurants open earlier for breakfast and brunch.

**Winter Yard Waste and Christmas Tree Collection**

Dec. 30 to Jan. 10

Iowa weather always keeps us guessing, so if you have yard waste left after November, you'll have one more chance to have it collected. Winter collection will occur Dec. 30 through Jan. 10, on your regular collection day. During winter collection, regular yard waste as well as live Christmas trees can be disposed of curbside.

**Christmas Open House**

Sundays, Dec. 1 and Dec. 8, 2-4 p.m.

Olmsted-Urban House, 4010 70th St., Urbandale

Enjoy a Christmas Open House at the Urbandale Historical Society's Olmsted-Urban House. A variety of activities will be held at the decorated house both Sundays.

Enjoy craft and vendor shows**Des Moines Holiday Boutique**

Friday to Sunday, Nov. 15-17

Iowa Events Center, 730 Third St., Des Moines

More than 200 vendors come together to create a fun, unique environment with the chance to purchase jewelry, gifts, food and more. www.desmoinesholidayboutique.com

Fall Makers Market

Sunday, Nov. 24, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Jester Park Nature Center, 12130 N.W. 128th St., Granger

Shop for gifts or goods just in time for the holiday season. This year's event has expanded from the Jester Park Nature Center and Outdoor Recreation buildings to include the Jester Park Lodge. With more than 60 local makers, artisans, and hand crafters, you are bound to find something for everyone on your list. Admission is free. Pho Wheels & Sushi, Miss Casey's Donut Delights, and Travelin' Tom's Coffee Truck will be onsite. www.jesterparknaturecenter.com/calendar-events/fall-makers-market

Christkindlmarket

Thursday to Sunday, Dec. 5-8

Principal Park, 1 Line Drive, Des Moines

Christkindlmarket features regional vendors selling old-world, hand-crafted products from wooden vendor stalls, lively performances of polka music, traditional dance and choirs in Yuletide Hall; children's activities; Glühwein (warm, mulled wine) and European beer. www.christkindlmarketdsm.com

Elves' Toyland Craft Show

Saturday, Nov. 23, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Runnells Community Center, 108 Brown St.

Plan a trip to Runnells for its annual holiday craft show.

Holiday Hop

Saturday, Nov. 23, 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Multiple locations in Winterset

Winterset's Holiday Hop is a time when the community's churches and several other organizations come together to offer a city-wide craft and bake sale featuring hand-crafted items, vintage Christmas decorations, baked goods, lunches, treats, art work, door prizes and much more. Each of the 11 locations contributes gift cards as door prizes. Get your ticket punched at each site and enter it for the drawing. As an added benefit, the churches use money raised at the holiday hop to support its charitable projects.

Participating stops include:

- First Christian Church, 103 W. Green St.
- First United Methodist Church, 309 E.

Jefferson St.

- First United Presbyterian Church, 210 W. Green St.

- Foursquare Church, 224 E. Court St.

- New Bridge Church, 1305 W. Jefferson St.

- St. Joseph Catholic Church, 1026 N.

Eighth Ave.

- St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1120 N. Eighth

Ave.

- Spotlight Dance Legacy, 116 E. Court St.

- Stop and Shop Craft Fair, Madison County

Fairgrounds Community Building

- Winterset Art Center, 224 S. John Wayne

Drive

- Winterset Public Library, 123 N. Second

St.

Family Christmas at Living History Farms

Saturday, Dec. 7, noon to 3 p.m.

11121 Hickman Road, Urbandale

Hear the sounds, see the sights, and smell the smells of a 19th-century Christmas. Enjoy carolers, old-fashioned demonstrations, a craft, stories, and a visit with old St. Nick. Tickets are \$9 for ages 2 and up (\$8 for members). Buildings are heated. Bundle up for wagon rides. Tickets are available at marketplace.lhf.org/Events.aspx. More information at www.lhf.org. ■

Holiday Hullabaloo

Nov. 29 to Dec. 29

Horizon Events Center, 10320

Hickman Road, Clive

The 2024 Holiday Hullabaloo is an immersive, family-friendly holiday experience that will surprise and delight guests this holiday season. Enjoy a variety of activities, entertainment and festivities that will allow you to create some fun holiday hullabaloo and memories. www.holidayhullabaloo.com



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Celebrations Couture on Oct. 17.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Connectify HR on Oct. 18.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Iowa Wolves on Oct. 24.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for phClean on Oct. 23.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Valley Southwoods expansion on Oct. 16.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Paws Pickup on Oct. 25.



Rob Reinard, Ruth Ebke, Terry Ebke, Connie Blodgett, Haley Ellis, Callie, Mady Arndt, Jack Arndt and Ollie at the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Paws Pickup on Oct. 25.



Frank Hanson, Rob Reinard and Sean Presnall at the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Paws Pickup on Oct. 25.

OUT & ABOUT



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Home Sweet Cone Ice Cream's new West Des Moines location on Oct. 11.



Chloe Bratvold and Jane Angstman at the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Home Sweet Cone Ice Cream's new location on Oct. 11.



Connie Ellis, Mady Arndt and Amber Rhoades at the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Home Sweet Cone Ice Cream's new location on Oct. 11.



Dan Giles, Allison Barns and Alex Vlach at the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Home Sweet Cone Ice Cream's new location on Oct. 11.



Rob Reinard, Jill Crosser and Frank Hanson at the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Home Sweet Cone Ice Cream's new location on Oct. 11.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for New American Funding on Oct. 17.



Whitney Parker, Amber Lampe, Tanner Hurrelbrink and Greg Griffin at the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for New American Funding on Oct. 17.



Connie Blodgett and Charity Baird at the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for New American Funding on Oct. 17.



Tom Florian and Sean Presnall at the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for New American Funding on Oct. 17.



Frank Hansen and Devin Fitzgerald at the West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for New American Funding on Oct. 17.

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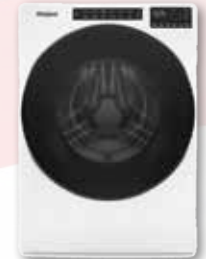
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