

Living

MAGAZINE

Holiday recipes

Residents share how to create the foods that make their season bright.

Barton is new teen librarian
LIBRARY

Hot honey chicken and waffle
RECIPE

Murphy enjoys watching community transform
WHERE WE LIVE



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WELCOME

PORK favor

We dedicated our cover story this month to holiday recipes, and why not? The Christmas season wouldn't be complete without the treasured family foods that pop up this time of year. From the elaborate five-course dinners to a simple cookie, most all of us have some connection with a family favorite.

Jolene's family introduced me to a family tradition they served each Christmas Eve. Her mother would make oyster soup and Spamwiches. Yes, Spamwiches — a holiday ritual for the Poraths. I would have preferred a ribeye, but nobody asked my opinion. So, I ate oyster soup and Spamwiches with Dean and Lois for a few years.

What exactly was this Spamwich, you ask? Well, to the best of my knowledge, it was chopped-up Spam, pickle relish and cheese toasted on half of a hamburger bun in the oven. At least that was the Porath version. I have to admit, it was delicious. The oyster soup? Not so much.

I recognize some of you may have never tried Spam, and for good reason. My friends who grew up on farms said, if they wanted meat, they got the real thing. For us city kids, though, canned meat was an alternative.

When Jolene and I started our own family, we continued the Spamwich tradition with our kids, and we still serve them each Christmas Eve. The oyster soup has been replaced with a choice of potato soup or broccoli cheese soup, thank goodness.

I wrote about this Spam tradition more than a decade ago in this column, and my email in-box was full the next day with favorite Spam recipes from readers. One person even shipped a Spam coin bank to me. It was then when I began to understand the Spam-lovers cult. In a conversation with a local Hy-Vee manager about Spam, my eyes were opened even more. Just to put this in perspective, more than 44,000 cans of Spam are produced every hour. Hawaiians alone consume approximately 7 million cans of Spam per year. Barack Obama even admitted he likes it.

Truth be told, I won't be rushing to the grocery store to buy Spam anytime soon, but I will continue to enjoy our Spamwiches on Christmas Eve, and I hope you can enjoy a few of your family favorites, too.

Merry Christmas, and thanks for reading. ■



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Holiday recipes

Residents share how to
create the foods that
make their season bright.

By Ashley Rullestad

Favorite dishes are often at the heart of holiday gatherings. Their aromas wafting through the house signal time to join family and friends in celebration, reminiscing and gratitude. Their tastes spark memories and conversation. For many, certain recipes are a holiday must. They are inextricably woven into the fabric of the season, and the festivities wouldn't feel complete without them.



Jan Miller makes cinnamon rolls for her family's holiday gatherings. Photo by Todd Rullestad

CINNAMON ROLLS

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups flour (plus 3 1/2 cups added later)
- 2 packages of yeast
- 1/2 cup potato flakes
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 cups quite warm water
- 1/3 cup butter
- 2 eggs, room temperature
- Add 3 1/2 cups flour and stir in. Knead by hand or use a dough hook attachment on a stand mixer.
- Cover loosely with a kitchen towel and let rest 20 minutes. Roll dough onto an 18-inch by 6-inch rectangle.
- Spread with butter, then sprinkle with cinnamon and brown sugar. Roll up, pinch edges, and cut into 1-inch slices.

FROSTING

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Pinch of salt
- 1 pound powdered sugar
- Place rolls in a greased pan and cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate overnight. The next morning, remove from fridge and let rise 20 minutes.

DIRECTIONS

- Place all ingredients except eggs in a mixer and beat 2 minutes until smooth.
- Add eggs and mix until well blended.
- Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until rolls are browned and cooked through.
- Glaze with frosting.

Cinnamon rolls

“I received this recipe many years ago from a friend, and it’s the only one I have used since then,” Jan Miller says. “No kneading required, and it’s so easy. It has been a favorite at church fellowships as well as with guests in our home. I hope you all will enjoy making it as well as sharing it with others. My husband and I moved to Ankeny from Washington State in June. Our son and family live here, and we were finally able to retire and move close to them. All of these recipes are holiday favorites, and we are excited to share them with family now living nearby.”

BREAKFAST CASSEROLE

- Grease 9-inch by 13-inch pan and layer the following:
- 5 slices bread
- 1 1/2 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 pound sausage, hamburger or bacon, cooked and drained
- In a bowl, mix 4 eggs with 2 cups of milk and 1/2 teaspoon salt and pepper.
- Pour on layers and then cover and refrigerate overnight.
- When ready to bake, cover with foil and bake at 350 degrees for about 45 minutes.
- Remove foil and cook an additional 15-20 minutes.

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DOUBLE CHOCOLATE BROWNIES

INGREDIENTS

- 3/4 cup flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/3 cup butter
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons water
- 12 ounces chocolate chips
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup walnuts (optional)

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 325 degrees. In a small bowl, combine flour, soda and salt. In a saucepan, combine butter,
- sugar and water.
- Bring just to a boil then remove from heat and add half the chocolate chips and vanilla. Stir until mixture is smooth.
- Transfer to a mixing bowl and add eggs one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Gradually beat in flour mixture until just combined. Stir in remaining chocolate chips.
- Spread into greased 9-inch square pan and bake 30-35 minutes.

GERMAN HOLIDAY COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds flour (equal to approximately 4 cups)
- 1 pound granulated white sugar (equal to approximately 2 cups)
- 1 pound honey
- 4 teaspoons cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons ground cloves
- 4 teaspoons baking soda mixed with a small amount of lemon juice
- 1 small bottle of anise baking oil mixed with a small amount (approximately 4 tablespoons) of cold coffee

DIRECTIONS

- Mix the sugar and honey together, then slowly add cinnamon, cloves, baking soda/lemon juice and coffee/anise oil. Once this is mixed well, slowly add in the flour. You may need to add a little more flour if the dough feels sticky.
- Roll onto a floured surface to the desired thickness, then cut with holiday cutters. Add cookies to a greased pan and bake at 350 degrees for 8 minutes. Do not overbake because they will get very hard.
- Once you remove them from the oven, allow them to cool on the pan for at least 2 minutes. Then remove from the pan and let cool on the cooling rack.

German holiday cookies

“This family favorite came from my great aunt, who originated from Germany,” Janet Wilwerding says. “We have been making this for 45 years. The peco flake is a family favorite that came from my grandma and one that our family has been making for over 40 years. A few of my treats can be found on my Instagram page, JWcakes12. I love this time of year.”

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Janet Wilwerding and her family make many holiday treats during the season.

SUGAR COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup granulated white sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 egg plus 2 tablespoons egg whites
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 3 cups flour

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In the bowl of your mixer, with the paddle attached, or a hand mixer, beat butter for one minute until soft. Add sugar, cream until well combined and smooth.
- Beat in egg and extracts, only until combined. In a separate

bowl, combine baking power with flour, mix together with whisk. Add flour/baking powder mixture to the wet ingredients.

- Mix until dough comes together. This dough is quite stiff. Hand knead if your mixer cannot keep up.
- Use dough immediately. If it's too hard, you can add another tablespoon of egg white or more vanilla. It is not necessary to chill the dough.
- Roll out to 1/4-inch or desired thickness, cut with holiday cutters. Add cookies to the greased cookie sheet. Bake for 9-10 minutes at 350 degrees.

PECO FLAKE

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups granulated white sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups raw Spanish peanuts
- 1 teaspoon butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 8-ounce package raw chip coconut

DIRECTIONS

- Combine sugar, syrup and water in a heavy skillet and boil, stirring constantly until water dissolves. Add salt

and peanuts. Cook, stirring occasionally to a hard rock stage, 294 degrees.

- Once it reaches 294 degrees, quickly add the butter, vanilla and baking soda. Stir quickly because it will double in size because of the baking soda. Then quickly stir in the coconut.
- Spread on a large cookie sheet that has been lined with parchment paper. Use a rolling pin and roll out until it's in a thin layer. When cooled, crack into pieces.



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The Hinkeldeys enjoy making and decorating sugar cookies every holiday season.

Holiday favorites

Laura Hinkeldey has a few staple dishes at her holiday gatherings, such as her sweet potato casserole. Another beloved part of the season is gathering with family to decorate cookies.

“We do the time-honored tradition of cut out cookies and decorating them,” Laura



Hinkeldey says. “Decorating them has become a big deal, as we have two crates full of decorating supplies now. It’s become an art in our house. We usually stay up late one night and do a whole bunch together and give them out as Christmas gifts or donate them to church functions. My boys, Jared and Noah, who just turned 10, definitely enjoy trying to eat extra sprinkles and icing when I’m not looking. The dye on their lips (and hyper behavior) always gives it away. It’s neat to see how their decorating style changes each year. I grew up doing these cookies with my mom and brothers, just like she did with her mom and siblings.”



Maggie Dallefeld’s grandma’s Christmas card picture from 1991 of her, her sister and three cousins at the farm with Grandma.

Christmas prime rib and Yorkshire pudding

“My mom collected these recipes from my dad’s side of the family, the Martins, and there is lots of German influence and heritage in many of the recipes,” Maggie Dallefeld says. “Most of them were my grandma’s, and she used many of them in the tearoom she ran on the farm. We did Christmas day at the farm every year until I was 27 years old, and it was always the same menu. One of my favorites was prime rib and Yorkshire pudding.” ■

SWEET POTATO CASSEROLE

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds sweet potatoes
- 1/3 cup melted butter
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup half and half
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Topping (optional):
- 1/3 cup flour
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/3 cup melted butter
- 1 2/3 cups nuts of your choice

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Peel and boil sweet potatoes until soft.
- Drain and pour into large mixing bowl. Mash.
- Add in all other ingredients and mix well.
- Pour into casserole dish. If making topping, mix dry ingredients in a bowl, add butter, mix well, and pour on top of sweet potato mixture.
- Add mini marshmallows if desired. Bake 30-40 minutes.

HEAVENLY ONIONS

INGREDIENTS

- 2 large onions, sliced
- 1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1/2 pound Swiss cheese, shredded
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Butter
- 1 loaf French bread

DIRECTIONS

- Sauté onions and mushrooms in butter. Place in 9-inch by 13-inch baking pan and cover with cheese.
- Top with French bread buttered and sliced 1/2 inch thick.
- Mix together remaining ingredients and pour on top of the bread. Refrigerate overnight.
- Bake at 350 degrees for 40 minutes.

CHRISTMAS PRIME RIB AND YORKSHIRE PUDDING

INGREDIENTS

- Standing rib roast (any size)
- Salt
- 2 cups milk
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups flour
- Drippings from beef roast (hot)

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Liberally season roast with salt and cook for one hour.
- Turn off oven and DO NOT OPEN DOOR.
- When ready to serve, heat at 300 for 45 minutes. Remove roast and let rest. Set oven to 425 degrees.
- Pour hot drippings from roast into a heavy baking dish and mix with all other ingredients.
- Mix until very smooth.
- Bake for 35 minutes.

NAMING of Neveln

I'm reading the November issue of Ankeny Living. Taylor Hutton didn't know when the education admin building was named Neveln. That was in June 1964. It was announced at the alumni banquet (which went to July maybe a couple years later). Ed Neveln was my extra grandpa — Gramps. I was thrilled with the name, as were my parents who graduated in 1941 and 1943. Until 1964, the high school and junior high shared a principal, Wayne Begg. Jerry Crosser was the first principal of the new junior high, and I was his secretary.

Enjoy the magazine!

Lyn (Dann) Van De Pol (1964 grad)

NEWS BRIEF

ANKENY City Manager Jones to step down

Ankeny city officials announced City Manager David Jones has accepted the role of city manager for the City of Urbandale, pending the approval of an employment agreement. His resignation will take effect in late January.

Jones has served as city manager in Ankeny since Oct. 1, 2013. During his tenure, he was instrumental in reducing the city's per-capita debt and spearheading a public-private partnership to construct the Albaugh Family Senior Community Center. He also led the staff efforts of a successful double bond referendum for Fire Station No. 3 and a 55,000-square-foot library. A new fire station, the city's fourth, is now under construction. During Jones' time as city manager, Ankeny experienced a remarkable 50% growth in population, adding more than 25,000 new residents, earning recognition from the U.S. Census Bureau as one of the fastest-growing cities in the United States multiple times.

"David has made a lasting impact on our community," said Ankeny Mayor Mark Holm. "Over the past 11 years, he has worked collaboratively with myself and other elected officials to dramatically improve the City's financial condition while delivering world-class facilities and amenities. Under David's leadership, the city saw over \$4 billion in commercial and residential investment and an 18% property tax rate reduction. We are grateful for his contributions and wish him the best in his future endeavors."

"I have thoroughly enjoyed my time in Ankeny and am grateful for the opportunity to lead the incredible staff here for more than 11 years," said Jones. "I wish the organization and community nothing but the best in the future."

The city council will discuss plans for the search for a new city manager in the near future. ■

By Scott Eriksen

WHERE has the year gone?

I started the year by encouraging you with, "Don't put it off another year." So, my question to you now is, "Is it still on your to-do list?"

It may be getting that will in place, or cleaning out that closet, or perhaps it is getting your funeral prearrangements in place so that your final arrangements will not be a burden to your family and loved ones at a time that will be very emotional and stressful.

We hear it all the time: "I am so glad to have this taken care of."

Planning your final arrangements begins with a simple conversation and can be a pleasant process. Planning ahead allows you time to give the thoughtful consideration that these important decisions deserve, and it allows time to visit with other family members to find out what will be important to them.

There are many options to think about when addressing your final arrangements, and there are even prepayment options available to those who wish to have their final financial obligations handled in advance.

An advanced planning consultant can walk you through these choices and options.

End the year by crossing one more item off your "to-do" list. Reach out to your funeral home of choice and schedule a meeting to start the conversation. You will be glad you did. ■



Information provided by Scott Eriksen, Director of Hamilton's Advanced Planning, Hamilton's Funeral Home, 605 Lyon St., Des Moines, 515-697-3670, www.HamiltonsFuneralHome.com.

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MURPHY enjoys watching community transform

Accessibility and amenities appreciated by 13-year resident.

For Laura Murphy, calling Ankeny home is about more than just a place to live — it's about being part of a thriving community. A resident for 13 years, Murphy moved from Urbandale with a clear purpose.

“I truly wanted to live, work and play in the community where I owned a business,” she says. “I also saw the opportunity and growth, which is why I chose to own a business in Ankeny.”

Watching Ankeny transform over the years has only deepened her appreciation.

“The changes that have happened in Ankeny over the last 13 years are amazing, and I know there were so many more before I lived here,” Murphy says. “I love watching a community grow. The growing pains and all the positive growth provide so much opportunity for families, business owners and community members. It is so exciting to be part of something.”

For Murphy and her family, the decision to purchase their current home came down to accessibility and connection.

“We are a busy family, and we love having access within walking or scooter distance to The District shopping, restaurants, concerts, the Ankeny Chamber and the library,” she says.

The neighborhood’s amenities, including parks, walking paths and proximity to Uptown Ankeny, were equally appealing.



Laura Murphy and her husband, Trent, and kids Carter and Claire (not pictured), have found Ankeny offers a variety of benefits.

“You never have to leave Ankeny to enjoy unique experiences,” Murphy adds.

Their home also fulfills Murphy’s wish list for scenic beauty, especially since her previous home offered a great sunset view.

“Our current home has the best of both worlds — we have a beautiful view of the downtown Des Moines skyline, a beautiful view of the lights and sounds of The District, and, to the west, we have breathtaking sunsets over water,” she says.

Murphy also appreciates the community atmosphere in her neighborhood. She feels Ankeny is a safe place to live and enjoys being able to be outdoors and see activity.

“We love being able to be a part of our community,” Murphy says. “Ankeny continues to grow, and we are gaining the amenities of that, but we have kept the small-town atmosphere. Small business owners are in their stores, our leaders are at the grocery stores, and it doesn’t seem that anyone is a stranger.”

Perhaps what stands out most to Murphy about Ankeny is the abundance of opportunities available to its residents, including access to private and public education that is “second to none,” as well as amenities ranging from a community theatre to an art center and beyond.

“It becomes part of your daily life, but I am not sure we realize how lucky we are to have so many options right outside our backdoor,” she says. ■

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Navigating retirement: strategies for tackling inflation

Inflation erodes the purchasing power of your hard-earned savings during retirement, making it a significant concern for nearly every pre-retiree we encounter. It's crucial not to overlook this factor when planning for a retirement that may last 20 to 30 years. Developing a robust strategy to address inflation is essential to maintain the lifestyle you desire.



of factoring in inflation when developing your retirement income strategy.

Maximizing guaranteed income sources, such as Social Security and pensions, can significantly aid in planning for inflation. A reliable income stream provides retirees with a sense of security and allows for confident spending. If you don't have a pension, you're not alone, but creating a personal pension or maximizing Social Security benefits through strategic planning can make a world of difference.

Inflation impacts your retirement savings. \$500,000 saved today, will only be worth about \$300,000 in 25 years, using 2% inflation. It's crucial to balance the need for growth with the need to preserve capital. As you transition into retirement, your investment strategy will likely need to change. The market risks you took when building your retirement savings may not be appropriate for managing those savings through retirement. This security allows you to withstand market downturns

without impacting your day-to-day living expenses.

Having a forward-thinking strategy is another important way to combat inflation. Understanding how taxable, tax-deferred and tax-free income sources will impact your overall tax burden can create significant advantages. One strategy to consider is a Roth conversion, which involves converting pre-tax money from a traditional IRA or 401(k) to a Roth IRA. This offers tax-free growth and qualified distributions. While the converted amount is taxed as ordinary income in the year of conversion, a Roth IRA is not subject to Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs), providing flexibility that can reduce your retirement tax bill.

Taking proactive steps now can help you create a secure and enjoyable retirement. This approach will allow you to focus on living out your retirement vision without the worry that inflation could force you to change your lifestyle.

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



Learn how to combat inflation for a secure retirement lifestyle in this episode of *Retiring Today with Loren Merkle*. Scan the QR code to watch now.



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WHAT'S NEW at the library?

The library has a new teen librarian who will specialize in supporting young adults, primarily between the ages of 12 and 18. She will assist the collection development librarian with curating the young adult collection and host programs and events like book clubs, writing workshops, crafts and STEM activities.

"My name is Brena Barton and I am so excited to be the new teen services librarian," she says. "I graduated from UNI in 2022 with my master's in history, and I currently live in Johnston with my husband, Matt, and our two pets, Honey (the cat) and Biscuit (our brand new puppy). In my free time, I love to read, write, play video games, go on walks and spend time with friends and family."

Join Brena and other tweens and teens on Dec. 30 between 10 a.m. and 4:45 p.m. for Escape Room 2025. You will help save the Times Square New Year's Eve Celebration by finding the missing key. This event is open to tweens and teens in grades 4-12. Registration is recommended but walk-ins are welcome as time and space allow.

Adults, are you trying to be more organized in the new year? We have you covered here at the library. Join us for the virtual presentation "5 Principles for Getting (and Staying!) Organized" on Wednesday, Jan. 8 from 5-6 p.m.

Presenting online, Organize Me! of NYC will be drawing upon their 15-plus years of experience. The one-hour presentation focuses on:

- What it really means to be organized.
- How organized living saves you time, money, space and energy.
- The best ways to organize and declutter your spaces.
- How to develop a positive, growth mindset that will keep you motivated and solution-focused.
- How to avoid getting off track.
- Getting your family on board.
- Creating a home and life you'll love.

Their fun-loving and non-judgmental approach makes everyone feel at ease and helps individuals know they are not alone with their struggle to stay organized. Visit our online calendar to learn more and to join the event on Jan. 8.

As we look to the new year, the library has examined the hours of operations. To better align with usage patterns, we will have new hours starting Jan. 2, 2025:

Monday - Thursday: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Friday and Saturday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday: 1-5 p.m. ■

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CONSIDER these year-end financial moves

As we enter the holiday season, your life may well become busier. Still, you might want to take the time to consider some financial moves before we turn the calendar to 2025.



Here are a few suggestions:

- **Review your investment portfolio.** As you look at your portfolio, ask these questions: Has its performance met my expectations this year? Does it still reflect my goals, risk tolerance and time horizon? Do I need to rebalance? You might find that working with a financial professional can help you answer these and other questions you may have about your investments.

- **Add to your 401(k) and HSA.** If you can afford it, and your employer allows it, consider putting more money into your 401(k) before the year ends — including “catchup” contributions if you’re 50 or older. You might also want to add to your health savings account (HSA) by the tax-filing deadline in April.

- **Use your FSA dollars.** Unlike an HSA, a flexible spending account (FSA) works on a “use-it-or-lose-it” basis, meaning you lose any unspent funds at the end of the year.

So, if you still have funds left in your account, try to use them up in 2024. (Employers may grant a two-and-a-half-month extension, so check with your human resources area to see if this is the case where you work.)

- **Contribute to a 529 plan.** If you haven’t opened a 529 education savings plan for your children, think about doing so this year. With a 529 plan, your earnings can grow tax deferred, and your withdrawals are federally tax free when used for qualified education expenses — tuition, fees, books and so on. And if you invest in your own state’s 529 plan, you might be able to deduct your contributions from your state income tax or receive a state tax credit.

- **Build your emergency fund.** It’s generally a good idea to keep up to six months’ worth of living expenses in an emergency fund, with the money held in a liquid, low-risk account. Without such a fund in place, you might be forced to dip into your retirement funds to pay for short-term needs, such as a major car or home repair.

- **Review your estate plans.** If you’ve experienced any changes in your family situation this year, such as marriage, remarriage or the birth of a child, you may want to update your estate-planning documents to reflect your new situation. It’s also important to look at the beneficiary designations on your investment accounts, retirement plans, IRAs and insurance policies, as these designations can sometimes even supersede the instructions you’ve left in your will. And, if you haven’t started estate planning, there’s no time like the present.

- **Take your RMDs.** If you’re 73 or older, you will likely need to take withdrawals — called required minimum distributions, or RMDs — from some of your retirement accounts, such as your traditional IRA. If you don’t take these withdrawals each year, you could be subject to penalties.

These aren’t the only moves you can make, but they may prove helpful not only for 2024 but in the years to come. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones. Member SIPC. Information provided by Kerry Curran, Financial Advisor, 2005 S. Ankeny Blvd., Suite 500, Ankeny, 515-965-6901

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Contact your local Edward Jones financial advisor for more information about maturity dates and applicable call provisions. For questions regarding tax implications, please contact your tax professional. Edward Jones, its employees, and financial advisors cannot provide tax advice.

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LAW ENFORCEMENT
(NON EMERGENCY)

515-286-3306



POLK COUNTY

HIGHLIGHTS



Polk County
Life Services
Center

Contact Information

BMC Behavioral Health Urgent Care (BHUC) - 515.282.5742
EMC Crisis Observation Center (COIC) - 515.282.5742
SVdP Sobering Center - 515.259.6262

The Polk County Board of Supervisors formally inaugurated the Life Services Center with a ceremonial ribbon-cutting event. This new facility represents an innovative approach to addressing the challenges faced by individuals facing addiction and mental health crisis. The establishment of the Life Services Center is a collaborative effort involving Polk County, the City of Des Moines, Broadlawns Medical Center, and St. Vincent de Paul. The Life Services Center will function as a secure environment where individuals in need of treatment can receive necessary care. The Life Services Center, located at 1914 Carpenter Ave. in Des Moines, is housed in a completely renovated building owned by Polk County. The City of Des Moines will split the operational costs of the facility 50/50 with Polk County. St. Vincent De Paul will provide case management personnel, while Broadlawns Medical Center will offer treatment services for individuals with addiction and mental health issues.



Polk County Sponsors On With Life 'Extreme Build'

Polk County was proud to participate in the construction of the On With Life two new family homes in Ankeny! These beautiful residences, part of Hubbell Realty Company 'Extreme Build' Homes of Hope initiative, were partially funded by a Polk County community development grant. These new homes will offer families a safe and peaceful retreat while supporting their loved ones receiving care at the On With Life campus. Together, we're building a brighter future for our community!



Polk County Helps Fund New Youth Mentoring Center

Polk County helped fund the renovation of a new Youth Mentoring Center for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Iowa. Spanning an impressive 10,500 square feet, the building will feature dedicated mentoring and community spaces, as well as serve as the new headquarters for staff. This state-of-the-art facility will empower the organization to meet the growing demand for mentorship, providing both "Bigs" and "Littles" a vibrant environment to cultivate meaningful mentoring relationships. Additionally, this space will enable corporate volunteer groups to witness firsthand the profound impact that Big Brothers Big Sisters has on our community, fostering stronger partnerships and engagement.



Iowa Events Center Naming Rights



Two esteemed local companies are set to elevate a cherished downtown destination. Polk County's Iowa Events Center will soon feature new names for two of its key facilities within the entertainment complex. The Wells Fargo Arena will be rebranded as the Casey's Center, while Hy-Vee Hall will transform into the EMC Expo Center. Both naming rights partnerships will commence in 2025, marking the beginning of a decade-long collaboration between Polk County and Oak View Group, the operators of the Iowa Events Center and these two new corporate partners. Polk County is thrilled that these respected local brands will contribute to the ongoing success and vibrant future of the Iowa Events Center.

PLAN for the future

2024 is coming to a close. The end of the year is a good time to take stock of your personal situation and proactively plan for the future.



assets upon your death. Through the power of attorney, you give another person the ability to make financial decisions for you should you become incapacitated. If you're too ill to speak for yourself, you can express your wishes and have your voice heard through a living will. This advance directive lets you detail your preferences for your medical care.

Make a list of key contacts

When you update your estate planning documents, you should also make a master list of important information. If you die or become incapacitated, your family will spend time figuring out what you own and whom they should contact. List your investment advisor, insurance agent, tax professional, banker and attorney. Make sure you have the correct contact information for each professional listed.

Review the title to your home

You should review how you hold title to your

home. When you purchased your house, the seller executed a deed. The deed contained important vesting information — the names on the title and the legal relationship between those titleholders.

If you are married, you probably want to ensure that both spouses are on title to the house. This may not be the case if the parties were married after one bought the house or if it is a second marriage. You also probably want to ensure that, if one titleholder were to die, the house would pass to the survivor. A simple review of who holds title and how title is held can prevent expensive problems later.

These are three simple yet very effective steps that can save time and expense in the future. Contact an experienced attorney to help you get 2025 off to a good start. ■

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

Update your estate plan

Putting your legal affairs in order is important. It reduces the burden on loved ones in the event of poor health or death. It can save time and expense. And it allows you to have control over how your assets pass. Every person should have three basic estate planning documents: a last will and testament, a durable financial power of attorney, and a living will / health care power of attorney.

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SPINNING and weaving guild grows

Rogers enjoys learning a variety of skills.

The Des Moines Weavers and Spinners Guild began in 1945. Originally, the group met in members' homes before moving to the Des Moines Arts Center basement. Next, the guild met in a church on limited weekday mornings, and only twice per year could they host what are now Fiber Days. In 2019, the guild succeeded in finding a permanent space at Franklin Jr. High in Des Moines. The new space allowed for access all the time. Since then, the guild has grown from 35 members to around 100 from across the Des Moines area.

The guild meets the second Saturday of every month from September to May. It has a Fiber Day twice a month where participants can spin and weave with others. One is held on a weekday and the other on a weekend. Beginner classes are taught each month. Band weaving, tapestry, spinning, weave structures, rigid heddle and dye study groups meet once a month.

Lynda Rogers, the current vice-president, is in charge of education.

"We have something going on six out of eight weekend days a month," she shares. "We fill in a lot of days in the week, too. We do outreach in the sheep barn on the first Sunday of the State Fair every year. We are also in the Blue Ribbon Quilt room all day every day of the fair. Ten to 12 times a year, we spin with the alpacas at Blank Park Zoo. We have also taught at Urbandale and Franklin libraries."

This past year, the guild participated in Hands-On History Camp at Jordan House Historical Society and, in June, at the 4-H Conference in Ames, teaching various weaving and spinning classes. In the past, the guild has also partnered with Ames High School Fiber Club to teach classes, as well as participating in the Beaverdale Farmers Market. FiberFest is an annual event with teaching, demonstrations and vendors, to be held next at Franklin Jr. High on April 26. The guild also participates in the Threads and Fiber Festival held every fall.

Rogers says she attended her first meeting just before COVID hit. She officially became an active member in 2021.

"Most of the membership was older then," she shares, "but it's amazing to see how many younger people have joined and gotten interested."

When asked which skill she works on the most, Lynda says, "I'm kind of a jack-of-all-trades, master of none. I do a little bit of a lot of skills."

She has attended many classes over the years. Last spring at FiberFest, guest artist Chaiki O'Brien demonstrated and taught Saori weaving, a freestyle form of weaving. Lynda says she "found this one very unique — the opposite end of the scale than pattern weaving."

The group tries to do a lot of community outreach to get the word out that people still do weaving and spinning. It also tries to host two nationally known experts to teach per year. Membership in the guild is \$40 per year, and the fee helps cover the guild's rent, equipment maintenance, and keeping everything up to date. Members can gather to ply their crafts together at monthly meetings, and they can check out equipment, looms and instructional books and videos from the guild's library. ■



Lynda Rogers is in charge of education for the Des Moines Weavers and Spinners Guild. She has developed a variety of spinning and weaving skills.

A LITTLE bit more...

If you can believe it, the Grinch wrote a good portion of this Ankeny Living article. On the day I wrote this article, I was driving back to work from a lunch break, and, all of a sudden, I could hear the Grinch talking to me. Before you (rightly) suggest that I should seek immediate medical attention, let me try to explain.



Our town is decorated so beautifully to celebrate the holiday season. Trees and tinsel and lights decorate homes and businesses across our community. The wind was blowing extremely hard on this particular day, and I wondered to myself if some of your Christmas decorations were going to blow away. It was sometime around that very moment that the Grinch started “talking to me.”

I have memories from my childhood of watching the cartoon version of “How the Grinch stole Christmas.” I’d hate to spoil the movie for you, but, near the end of the movie, after “somehow” all of the Christmas decorations and presents go missing from town, the Grinch is surprised at how the townspeople are still filled with joy. He hears them singing a song and wonders aloud (with the help of a narrator) words like these:

“It came without ribbons. It came without tags. It came without packages, boxes or bags. (And he puzzled and puzzled ‘till his puzzler was sore. Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn’t before.) What if Christmas, (he thought), doesn’t come from a store. What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more.”

As I often do when the Grinch says something thought provoking, I spoke out loud what I had heard back to myself... “What if Christmas, perhaps, means... a lot more.” When I think about all that Christmas means, I can’t help but think of trees, presents, lights, decorations and the ways our community celebrates Christmas.

But what if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more?

I believe with all of my being that my Lord and my God, my Savior and my Friend, my Comforter and my Deliverer, my Help and my Hope in every season was born as a baby on what we now call “Christmas.” Jesus came without ribbons, tags, packages, boxes or bags as an offering of love for a world that is still desperate to know that Christmas — and every other day — can mean so much more. God’s love offers to transform each of our lives and shine light into every darkness.

So, I parked my car, walked to my desk, and started typing this article that I now imagine ends with the narrator from the Grinch reading you these words, “Unto you was born a Savior. He is Christ the Lord. I’m sure that Christmas means a little bit more.”

God loves you. I love you. Merry Christmas. ■

Information provided by John Wagner, campus pastor, Christian Life Center, Ankeny First United Methodist Church, john.wagner@ankenyfirst.org.

@first

Ankeny First United Methodist Church

CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICES

UPTOWN - 5PM, 7PM
TRADITIONAL

CLC - 5PM, 7PM
CONTEMPORARY



MORE INFO



www.ankenyfirst.org

PLANNING to pass on your legacy

Planning for the future is often something we put off. However, early planning is one of the most important steps you can take to ensure loved ones are taken care of and your wishes are honored in the future. Here are a few things you can start doing now:



they can be a family member, trusted friend or professional. If you designate someone as a POA, you should communicate your wishes with them.

- **List and title accounts** – Clearly list every bank or financial institution where you have money or investments for your loved ones. Provide them with the documentation and instructions each bank or financial institution will require to have access granted to them. Also be sure any bank accounts you may want included in a trust are titled appropriately.

- **Review safe deposit box details** – Check your bank's procedures on how a loved one could recover items within your safe deposit box. This may require extra documentation, which you should explain and provide for any beneficiaries.

- **Designate titles** – To avoid confusion, clearly designate beneficiaries for titles of cars, property, etc.

- **Update trusts** – A successor trustee, or whoever takes over management of your trust, may need to provide third parties with specific

documentation that differs based on the terms of your trust proving their authority to act on behalf of the trust. Your successor trustee will need to provide your named beneficiaries a comprehensive inventory of all the trust's accounts and property.

Ask questions

Start asking your banks and financial institutions questions on what you need to do to be able to provide a smooth transition for your loved ones. You may need to change titles of your accounts, trusts, safe deposit boxes, etc.

Preparing your legacy plan early ensures your assets and wishes are handled with care and leaves a lasting, positive impact on those who matter most to you.

Speak with your banker about how you can start preparing your legacy today. ■

Information provided by Rebecca Moomey, VP, Senior Private Banker, 1925 N. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny.

Have conversations

If you haven't already, start having conversations with the people you want to involve in legacy planning. It's especially important to talk to the key person or people you designate to oversee your legacy so they can ask any clarifying questions now.

Be prepared

- **Consider a power of attorney (POA)** – A POA allows one or more people to manage money and property on your behalf. The person doesn't have to be an attorney or lawyer —



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RECIPE

QUICK, comforting ways to warm up winter in minutes

(Family Features) After a day battling the cold and fighting the wind, a comforting meal made at home is often just what you crave. Turn those blustery winter conditions into warm, cozy evenings with favorite recipes that offer not only convenience but provide a little kick of spice.

For a quick and delightful meal that's equal parts comforting and unique, try this hot honey chicken and waffle that's sure to please with a crispy rice waffle loaded with sweet and spicy flavor, topped with chicken and drizzled with honey. It's a treat that truly satisfies from the inside out in just seven minutes.

The crispness of the gluten-free rice waffle is made possible by Minute Rice's Hot Honey Chicken Seasoned Rice Cup that entices taste buds with a sweet and mildly spicy contrast and playful presentation. Ready in as little as 60 seconds, the rice cup ensures convenience and distinct seasoning, making each waffle perfectly flavored and offering a satisfying crunch with every bite.

Whether you're shaking up your breakfast routine or enjoying a fun and easy dinner, it can be taken to new heights with the combination of honey and a sprinkle of powdered sugar for delicious decadence.

Visit MinuteRice.com to find more family-friendly ways to warm up mealtimes all winter long. ■

Hot honey chicken and waffle

Prep time: 2 minutes

Cook time: 5 minutes

Servings: 1

- 1 Minute Hot Honey Chicken Seasoned Rice Cup
- 1 egg
- nonstick cooking spray
- 2 chicken tenders, cooked
- 2 tablespoons honey, for garnish
- 1 tablespoon powdered sugar, for garnish

DIRECTIONS

- Preheat mini waffle maker. Heat rice according to package directions.
- In medium mixing bowl, combine rice and egg. Mix well.
- Spoon rice mixture into waffle maker. Cook until light goes off.
- Place waffle on plate with cooked chicken tenders on top.
- Drizzle with honey, sprinkle powdered sugar on top and serve.



* WISHING YOU AND YOUR FAMILY A **happy holidays!**

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NEW OPTION for remaining independent at home as you age

Everett, 72, has lived in his home in Urbandale for 40 years. He and his late wife raised their children there; he knows his neighbors, and he's involved with the greater community.

Everett plans to remain in his home forever. But his daughters are concerned. Everett is healthy, but neither of them lives in town, and they're concerned about what will happen as their father grows older. If he needs help remaining independent in his house, they won't be able to provide that assistance. They want to hope for the best but plan for possible scenarios.

Everett's daughters' concerns are spot-on; staying in our homes independently 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.

So, you may be asking yourself, on your own behalf or on behalf of someone you love: "If moving into a community is not a desired option and there are concerns about potential health issues later on, what can I do?"

One potential solution 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.

Here are some questions you'll want to consider asking:

- **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.

- **How long has the organization that's backing the program been in business, and what's its reputation in the senior-living industry?** Even if the program itself does offer all the services you're looking for, make sure you're comfortable with the organization itself. 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. ■



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.

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- Protect your assets with a plan to cover primary healthcare costs – or with WesleyLife at Home services.
- Plan for future health needs with WesleyLife's network of home health and senior living services.

Resolve to be well.

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Mary R. in Des Moines says, "I'm 77 and planning for my future. I want quality time with my family, not difficult decisions during difficult times. WellAhead offers me a holistic approach and a leading-edge philosophy towards aging, with benefits for the future and for today."

Check for cancellations

Upcoming in Ankeny Living magazine:



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. 25 to be included in the January issue.

Grandparents who enjoy living near their grandchildren:

Share why you enjoy living near your grandchildren and how you spend time together. Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com by Jan. 24 to be included in the February issue.



Square Dance Lessons

Sunday nights starting Jan. 19, 6:30 p.m.
Douglas Avenue Presbyterian Church,
4601 Douglas Ave., Des Moines

Ankeny Square Dance Club is sponsoring Square Dance Lessons. Cost is \$20 per person for the entire session accepted at the third lesson. Attend with or without a dance partner. You'll learn the calls, one at a time, taught by a caller (instructor) and volunteers. For more information, call Sandy Townsend, 515-294-2624, or visit www.ankenysquares.com.

Workshops and classes

The Ankeny Art Center,
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Adult classes: Beginner: Acrylic Basics, Watercolor Basics, Pottery Basics (sells out quickly); Intermediate/Advanced Classes: Drawing II, Watercolor II and III, Pottery II (sold out), Pottery III (new), Pottery Studio. Register at www.ankenyardcenter.org.

Youth classes: Saturdays, Jan. 4-25, K - Fourth Grade Pottery Sculpture, K - Fourth Grade Art Exploration, Fifth - Eighth Grade Pottery Wheel, Fifth - Eighth Grade Drawing. Register at www.ankenyardcenter.org.



Neighbor to Neighbor free meal

Dec. 22, doors open at 4 p.m., serving begins at 5 p.m.
St. Anne's Episcopal Church,
2110 W. First St. Ankeny

This month, the meal will feature Christmas dinner. No one is required or expected to be a member of St. Anne's. The meals are free and are followed by seven hands of free bingo. There are small prizes for six hands and a \$15 gift card for the last hand. Freewill donations are accepted but not required nor expected.

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“Tender Years Daycare and Garbage Guys have had a working relationship with Availa Bank ever since they came to the Ankeny area. The support staff at Availa is excellent! They try to answer all my questions, and if they can't, they go out of their way to find someone who can.” — Paula Eichinger

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In the Galleries: 2024 Member Exhibition: The Photography Show

Through Jan. 15
The Ankeny Art Center,
1520 S.W. Ordinance Road

Admission is free. Enjoy this show of Art Center's members' photography.



Live productions

- Des Moines Performing Arts – Temple Theatre Comedy Series, through Dec. 21. **“Erma Bombeck: At Wit’s End”**
- Des Moines Community Playhouse, through Dec. 22. **“Beauty and the Beast”**
- Iowa Stage Theatre Company through Dec. 22. **“A Christmas Carol”**
- Des Moines Symphony, Dec. 21-22, at Westminster Presbyterian Church. **“Holiday Brass”**

CITYVIEW’s Fire and Ice

Saturday, Jan. 18, 1-4 p.m.
Historic Valley Junction Foundation,
137 Fifth St., West Des Moines

Join CITYVIEW’s Fire and Ice, an interactive winter pub crawl in Historic Valley Junction. Fire and Ice is a hockey-themed liquor sampling event that will be sure to warm up your winter blues. With your event ticket, you will receive 10 individual drink tickets to sample some of the best winter cocktails from establishments in the Valley Junction area. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$35 at the door. For tickets, visit <https://fire-and-ice.dmcityview.com/>.



In the Christmas Mood with the Glenn Miller Orchestra

Dec. 22, 7 p.m.
Hoyt Sherman Place,
1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines

Enjoy the sounds of the season. For tickets, visit hoyshtsherman.org.

Pop n’ Jolly: A Holiday Show for All Generations

Monday, Dec. 23, 6:30 p.m.
Temple Theater, 1011 Locust St.,
Des Moines

Join Wagner Summer Theater for its first annual holiday family-friendly event, Pop n’ Jolly. Come enjoy fun and laughs with some of the area’s top musicians. Grab the crew and take fun photos with Santa and partake in a holiday singalong. The evening will include holiday classics by Dave Wagner and his special guests including two-time Cloris Award winner Julie Larson and national opera vocalist Craig Irvin. Also featured will be a selection of everyone’s favorite holiday songs performed by the Wagner Summer Theater Youth Vocal Group. Signature cocktails, mocktails and hot cocoa will be available for purchase. Tickets are available through Des Moines Performing Arts, www.desmoinesperformingarts.org. For more information, visit www.wagnersummertheater.com. ■

Make a Difference This Holiday Season

BE A BLOOD DONOR

In the season of giving, there are many ways to make a difference—donating time, services, or gifts. But have you ever thought about giving the most precious gift of all—the gift of life? Every day, patients in Des Moines area hospitals rely on LifeServe Blood Center for essential blood products. Blood cannot be manufactured; it can only come from generous donors like you.

This holiday season, you have the power to make a difference beyond measure. By rolling up your sleeve and donating blood, you can give a gift that truly embodies the spirit of the season—hope, life, and love.

Let this be the year you start a new holiday tradition—a family tradition. Invite your loved ones to join you in giving the gift that truly matters, and together, you can help save lives. Because there’s no greater gift than the one that allows someone else to enjoy another holiday with those they love.

Make this holiday season a time for life, love, and lifesaving generosity. Be a blood donor.

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EDUCATION

By Ashley Rullestad

MEET Kelly Weber

Music is southside assistant band director's passion.

Kelly Weber is a second-generation band director who credits her family for her love of music. Her mother taught middle school band, including at Johnston schools, and her stepfather taught both middle school and high school band for Des Moines Public Schools, spending most of his career at Lincoln High School. Her dad was the high school director at Woodward



Kelly Weber is the assistant band director for Ankeny's south feeder schools.

Granger and then Johnston High School before his death in 1997.

"He was also active on the jazz scene in Des Moines, playing baritone sax in various big bands and musical pit orchestras for traveling shows," she says. "I knew I, too, wanted to teach jazz. Jazz has been a large part of my soul since I picked up a bass guitar when I was 11. I embraced the creative outlet and fell in love with jazz music. It helped shape who I am as a human being. It was important to me that I always be able to further the jazz education of others."

Weber graduated from Iowa State University and spent time teaching at St. Edmond in Fort Dodge and Earlham community schools before coming to Ankeny in 2021. In her current role as assistant director, she leads the 10th grade concert band, the top high school jazz band, and is part of the team that teaches the Marching Hawks. She is also the color guard sponsor.

"I am honored to be a part of the tradition of excellence that is Ankeny bands. Working in this job has pushed me to be the best educator and musician I can be. After working many years as the sole band director in small school districts, being part of a team of directors is truly a gift. We get to collaborate with, and learn from, each other. So, to Jennifer Williams, Nate Newhard, Crystal Rumbaugh, Christian Baughman, Pam Hayden, and the dynamite fifth-grade directors of Ankeny, thank you."

Though Weber has enjoyed seeing kids as young as fifth grade start on their instruments and progress through the years, she says she "clicks" better with the older students, so she likes her high schoolers and teaching upper-level music. She also gets to see their growth, since she also teaches lessons to students at Parkview and Southview before they hit AHS.

Weber remembers her first years of teaching when she was a "baby-faced" director,

"I was regularly mistaken for a student and asked to leave directors lounges at festivals. Once I was playing bass and conducting my students for a basketball pep band performance, and a very sweet older couple put a hand on my shoulder and asked me to tell my band director that we were doing a great job. I didn't have the heart to tell them I was the band director."

When she isn't playing music, listening to music or teaching music, Weber spends her time with a 4-year-old bundle of energy and personality, her son, Jack. He wants to play saxophone, guitar or drums someday. Weber also enjoys baking, shopping and watching 1980s movies. ■

A Guide to Des Moines' Top Drive-Thru Christmas Lights in 2024!

From sparkling drive-thru displays to festive neighborhood light shows, here's your ultimate guide to the best Christmas lights in our local communities of Grimes, Urbandale, and Ankeny this year!



Grimes, Iowa

Argo Christmas Lights
1801 N.W. Morningside Drive



Urbandale, Iowa

Miracle on 86th Street
Charles Gabus Memorial
Tree Park

Santa's Rock N Lights
Living History Farms



Ankeny, Iowa

Gingerbread Lane
SE Richland Court

Buxton Family Lights
1832 SE Hillside Drive

Frosty Lane
Directly across from Gingerbread Lane



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WELLNESS

By Teresa Sieck

NON-ABLATIVE laser

What is it, and what does it do?

Fractionated non-ablative lasers use light at certain wavelengths to create microscopic holes in the skin, triggering our body's natural wound-healing process to stimulate collagen production in the treated area(s). Collagen is a vital element within the body that aids in elasticity of the skin. The laser works by heating the deeper layers of skin without damaging the surface. These treatments promote much needed new cell growth and give you glowing soft skin.



Non-ablative laser treatment can improve skin tone and texture, reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, decrease pore size and treat sun damage as well as treat other skin conditions such as melasma.

Non-ablative laser treatments are ideal for patients who want to delay the appearance of aging or those looking to maintain beautiful skin or get their skin back to a more youthful state.

No need to take off work. There is little to no downtime for these treatments. The only thing your co-workers will start to notice is your beautiful skin.

Non-ablative lasers can be used year-round and are suitable for all skin types including melanin-rich skin. Check with a licensed medical provider to see if they have a laser that is suitable for you. ■

Information provided by Teresa Sieck MPAS, PA-C, PhD, Luxe Medical Spa and Aesthetics, 88 Paine Circle S.E., Suite 7, Bondurant, 515-630-8637, www.luxemedicalspa.net.

Merry Christmas!

We are thankful for the opportunity to serve this community!

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HEALTH

By Dr. Todd Pietig

WHAT IS meibomian gland dysfunction?

Meibomian gland dysfunction (MGD) is a common cause of dry eye disease, occurring when the meibomian glands, located in the eyelids, become obstructed or dysfunctional. These glands are responsible for producing the oily layer of the tear film, which helps prevent the evaporation of tears and keeps the eyes lubricated. When the glands fail to function properly, the tear film becomes unstable, leading to dryness. Meibomian gland dysfunction can be caused by various factors, including aging, hormonal changes, certain medications, systemic conditions and environmental factors such as prolonged screen use or dry air. The condition is often characterized by symptoms such as burning, itching, a gritty sensation and blurry vision. Over time, untreated MGD can contribute to chronic dry eye disease and even damage the surface of the eye. One of the emerging treatments for MGD is intense pulsed light (IPL) therapy. IPL has been used primarily for skin conditions like acne and rosacea, but recent studies have shown its effectiveness in treating MGD. Research has shown that IPL therapy can significantly improve symptoms of MGD, including reducing eye dryness and enhancing the function of the meibomian glands. IPL works by delivering bursts of light energy to the skin around the eyes. This treatment helps to reduce gland obstruction by promoting the secretion of oils from the glands and reducing inflammation in the eyelid tissue. Other treatments options for MGD include warm compresses, omega-3 supplements and prescription medications to reduce inflammation. ■



Information provided by Dr. Todd Pietig, Ankeny Family Vision Center, 311 N. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny, 515-964-1671.

AUTO accidents and whiplash injury

Early treatment prevents long-term damage.

The term “whiplash” was created in 1928 to define a neck injury caused by the sudden movement of the head backward, forward or sideways resulting in damage to the muscles, joints, ligaments and other connective tissues in the neck and upper back. Whiplash injuries can manifest in a wide variety of ways, including neck pain, headaches, fatigue, upper back and shoulder pain, cognitive changes and low-back pain.

If you have been involved in a car accident, whiplash injuries need to be taken very seriously. Because symptoms of a whiplash injury can take weeks or months to manifest, it is easy to be fooled into thinking that you are not as injured as you really are. Too often, people don't seek treatment following a car accident because they don't feel hurt. In fact, research shows that the severity of injuries sustained in a car accident is not directly proportional to the speed of impact. In other words, people can sustain serious injuries even in low-speed collisions.

Numerous factors contribute to the overall whiplash trauma such as the direction of the impact and the speed of the vehicles, as well as the gender, age and physical condition of the person involved. It is impossible to predict the pattern of symptoms each individual will suffer. Unfortunately, by the time more serious complications develop, some of the damage from the injury may have become permanent. Numerous studies have shown that, years after whiplash victims settle their insurance claims, roughly half of them state they still suffer with injury-related symptoms.

Chiropractic care aids in recovery from whiplash

Whiplash is a unique condition that requires the expertise of a skilled health professional, specially trained to treat this type of injury. With proper care, many mild whiplash injuries heal within six to nine months. The single most effective treatment for minimizing the long-term impact of whiplash injuries is a combination of chiropractic care, rehabilitation of the soft tissues, and stretching at home. Chiropractic care utilizes manual manipulation of the spine to restore the normal movement and function of the spinal joints.

In some severe cases of whiplash, it may be necessary to have some medical care as part of the overall treatment plan. The most common medical treatments include anti-inflammatory medications, muscle relaxants, trigger-point injections, and, in some cases, epidural spinal injections. These therapies should only be used when necessary for short-term pain relief and should not be the treatment focus. After all, a drug cannot restore normal joint movement and stimulate healthy muscle repair.

If you or someone you know is suffering from a whiplash injury and have not found the relief for which you are looking, consider chiropractic. They may be able to help. ■

Information provided by Christopher M. Renze, D.C., D.I.B.C.N., of Renze Chiropractic Clinic, P.C. For more information, visit www.renzechiro.com or call the office at 965-3844.



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THE BENEFITS of the chamber



As we close out 2024, it's great to think about all the Chamber can offer your business in 2025. Our Total Resource Campaign is up and running, and now is the time to enjoy the benefits of the Chamber at the next level.

We are so grateful for our current six investor members and asked them for their thoughts on the Ankeny Chamber:

"I have been a chamber member for over 25 years and an investor member since the inception of that benefit 20 years ago. No matter what stage of business or life I was in, the chamber always stepped up and had something to offer my business." — *Trent Murphy of Murphy Enterprises*

"The Ankeny Chamber networking opportunities are helpful for the city to connect with membership and to make sure Team Ankeny is working in unison." — *Mark Holm of City of Ankeny*

"Karl Chevrolet's alignment with The Ankeny Chamber and the relationships we've built are incredibly meaningful to our business. Being able to connect with local businesses and the community is at the very heart of our brand. These partnerships help us grow, stay engaged and continue supporting the people who make this area such a special place to live and work." — *Tony Mills of Karl Chevrolet*

"The Ankeny Chamber of Commerce has such a huge impact on local businesses and the quality of life in our community. They provide valuable marketing and networking opportunities to its many members and prove how unified our business community is in making Ankeny the best place to work and live. Central Bank is proud to be part of such a great organization." — *Damon L. Miller of Central Bank*


"The District is made up of passionate local business owners, and the Ankeny Chamber's mission aligns perfectly with our values. Because of this shared commitment to our community and local businesses, we see true value in our partnership, which helps strengthen both our businesses and the area we serve." — *Ashley Johnson*

"The support of the Ankeny Chamber is crucial to the Board of Supervisors for several reasons: It helps provide networking opportunities, supports economic development and small businesses, and allows for community engagement, which is essential for the growth and vibrancy of the Ankeny community." — *Polk County Supervisor Steve Van Oort*


Over time, my return on investment with the chamber has changed and has looked very different throughout that time. The chamber has also been an asset to me personally and has given my family a way to get involved and build wonderful relationships in the community. My business investment has been a no-brainer, and I hope the Ankeny Chamber can benefit your business in some way.

In 2025, we will have a variety of exciting networking, sponsorship and learning opportunities. Don't hesitate to reach out. Our team looks forward to speaking with you about all the chamber has to offer in 2025. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! ■

Information provided by Trent Murphy, Interim Chamber CEO, Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce.




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DISCOVER Ankeny

Discover Ankeny was held Thursday, Nov. 7, at the FFA Enrichment Center in Prairie Trail.



Elizabeth Broadus, Amy Bassett and Nallely Hernandez



Trent and Kaitlyn Hulseberg



Amy Bishop and Alexis Smith



Sierra McGinnis and Bre Neel



Julia Grismore and Sherri Nicholson



Taylor Comer and Cynthia Patterson



Jeremy and Debra Neppel



Dutch and Stephanie VanDerKamp



Matthew Pillman and Carrieann Harter



Jamie Balentine and Ashley Stolze



Dawson Peters, Andres Villegas-Cruz and Angie Rippin

OUT & ABOUT



A ribbon cutting was held for Full Spectrum Administrative Support Services on Nov. 19.



Hailey Boots and Misty Trogdon at the ribbon cutting for Full Spectrum Administrative Support Services on Nov. 19.



Jamie Anderson and Brandon Mumm at the ribbon cutting for Full Spectrum Administrative Support Services on Nov. 19.



Marti Skow and Dominique Bryant at the ribbon cutting for Full Spectrum Administrative Support Services on Nov. 19.



Jacob Smith, Jackson Trumper, Andrew Johnson and Shey Moore at the ribbon cutting for Full Spectrum Administrative Support Services on Nov. 19.



Lisa McDaniel and Kelsey Moore at Discover Ankeny on Nov. 7.



Jonnell Miller and Heather Lilienthal at Discover Ankeny on Nov. 7.



Mike Jesmer, Joan Jesmer and Angela Wagner at the ribbon cutting for Full Spectrum Administrative Support Services on Nov. 19.



A ribbon cutting was held for Hyper Energy Bar on Nov. 25.



A ribbon cutting was held for Sip and Burn Liquors on Nov. 26.

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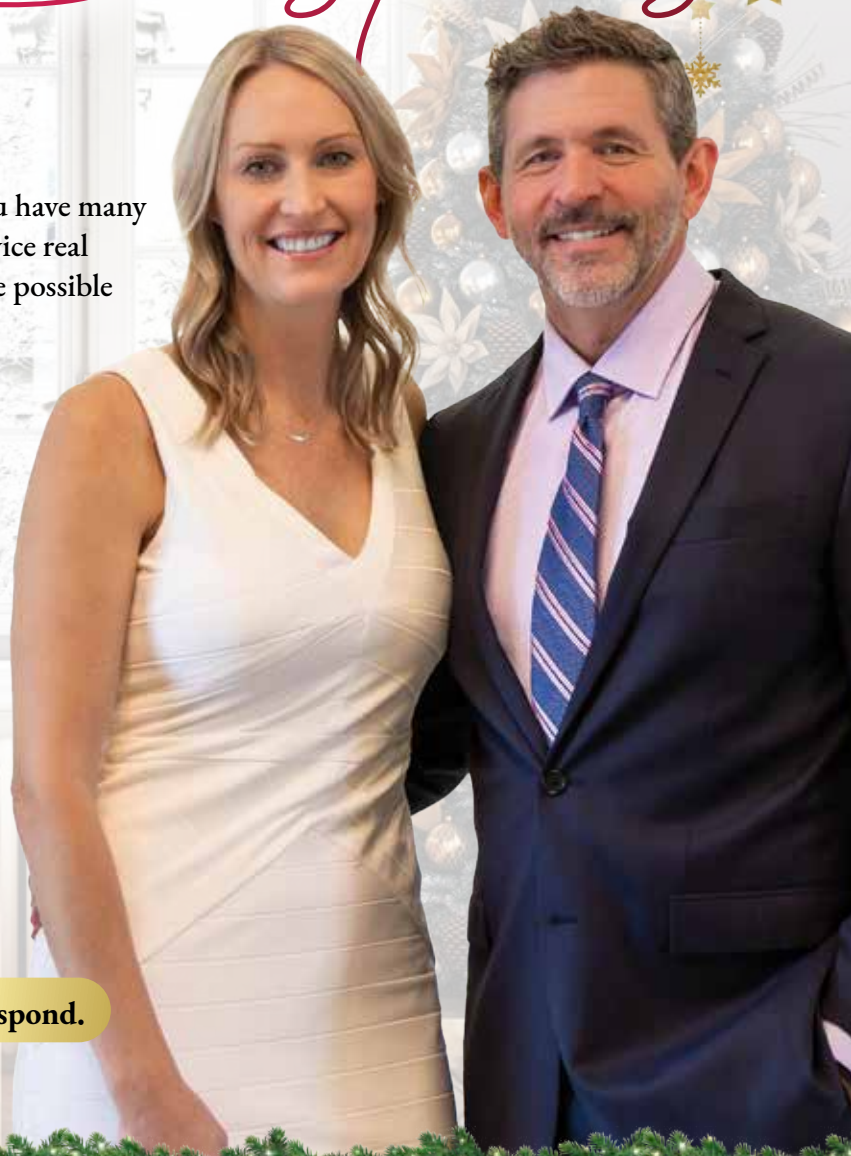
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