

# Living

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# ON THE Map

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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 some 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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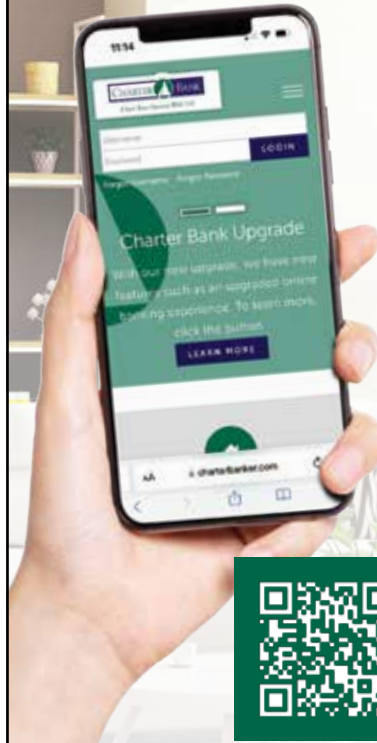
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# ON THE *Map*

Landmarks add to Ankeny's character



By Ashley Rullestad

Artworks. Architectural delights. Stunning homes. Monuments. Ankeny 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 Ankeny is one of a kind. This month's cover story tells the stories of some of the most recognizable landmarks of the city.

The big chair in Uptown Ankeny celebrates the history of the business district and provides a photo op for Lindsey and Jared Foss.

## New landmarks

**The big chair in Uptown:** The Uptown Chair was a gift to the Uptown business district from its friends at Real Deals, Lindsey and Jared Foss. The chair was created by artist Doug Applegate. The local mural painter took inspiration from Uptown businesses and the history of the neighborhood.

The chair was in place, as planned, by the time RAGBRAI rolled through town in 2023 to serve as a photo op. Now, business leaders bring it out for the warmer months and store it at the Real Deals warehouse during winter to keep it protected from harsh weather.

### Bike art installation on Irvinedale:

Ankeny city staff created the bicycle sign to welcome RAGBRAI through Ankeny last year. The sign, which spells out ANKENY in big block letters surrounded by a pyramid of bicycles, sits at the northwestern trailhead off Northwest Irvinedale Drive.

The bicycle sign was intended to be a short-term feature for RAGBRAI and not constructed to be permanent. But City Councilmember Jeff Perry says the installation has been well-received by community members, and city



Ankeny cyclists enjoyed posing with the new bike art piece during RAGBRAI last year. Photo by Kim Skaff

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officials have now taken steps to formally approve its location.

“Feedback was very positive, so it is now a permanent display,” he says. “It goes well with the trailhead that the city built there by the High Trestle Trail.”

The sign and new trailhead have proven to be a popular spot for pictures and a water break. There was very little cost to create the art piece, as the bikes were collected by public works staff during spring cleanup days. Much of the metal for the sign was donated, as was the paint.

The city’s Cultural Arts Board has recommended leaving the bicycle sculpture at its current location while monitoring the condition of the materials and the structural stability. The sculpture’s condition is expected to be evaluated in July 2026.

## The fallen soldier memorial at Somersby Park

In 2015, the City of Ankeny dedicated a new memorial to those who gave their lives for their country. Plans for the memorial began in 2007 following the death of Master Sergeant Scott Carney.

Carney, 37, died in action for our country in Herat, Afghanistan, while assigned to the Second Brigade Combat Team, 34th ID of the Iowa National Guard based in Boone. Scott joined the U.S. Army in 1989 and was stationed at Fort Dix, New Jersey; Panama; Wiesbaden, Germany; Fort Benning, Georgia; Camp Casey, Korea; and Fort Lee, Virginia. He met his wife, Jeni Carney Green, while they were stationed together in Germany. She was an Army medic in the 583rd Ambulance Company, and he worked in the motorpool. They were married in 1992, had twin



The fallen soldier memorial is located in Somersby Park.

sons in 1994, and moved to Iowa in 1998.

In December of 2000, he joined the Iowa National Guard at Camp Dodge as an active guard reserve. Carney accepted a full-time position in

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## FEATURE



The Lions Club used to serve chicken dinners to hungry Ankeny residents at Wagner Park.



The Ankeny bandshell has allowed for many new activities at Wagner Park.

Boone with the Second Brigade in 2004. He was presented numerous awards throughout his career, including, most recently, an Army Commendation Medal, an Iowa Accommodation Medal and the Bronze Star.

In 2007, the Carneys lived in the Somersby neighborhood with their then 12-year-old twin sons, Jacob and Justin.

“When he died in Afghanistan in August of that year, our Ankeny neighbors became our protectors, supporters, nurturers and, ultimately, our extended family,” Carney Green says. “Debbie and John ‘Swede’ Lundstrom (former Ankeny School board member and Ankeny city councilman) and other neighbors took on the task of fundraising and planning for a fallen soldier memorial.”

Debbie Lundstrom became a diligent proponent of the memorial and did not stop in her efforts until it was built. Because of her, Carney Green had the privilege to be a part of the design and planning of the statue and memorial layout, which was dedicated in Somersby Park at 816 S.W. Springfield Drive. The memorial flag poles and landscaping were an Eagle Scout project of Matt Bruder of Ankeny in partnership with the Ankeny Knights of Columbus and the city.

“It is a beautiful place to honor Scott and Ankeny military service members that have died in service to our country since 9/11,” says Carney Green. “I have since moved to the Uptown Ankeny area, but I visit the memorial often. I am honored to know that the Ankeny community will never forget Scott and the sacrifice that was made for our country.”

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The old Neveln building, circa 1952.



The Neveln building houses Ankeny Community School District administrative offices.

**Historic spots**

**Wagner Park:** The land where Wagner Park currently sits was donated by notable Ankeny resident Henry Wagner.

“Wagner used to have these community BBQs, and he would give the meat away for free since he was a cattleman. He’d cook the beef, and people from all over would come and enjoy a free meal on Henry Wagner,” Ankeny Historical Society Director Rosemary Taylor Hutton says.

Wagner Park has been used for many things through the years — a playground for Parkview Elementary and the location for many of Ankeny’s celebrations: Fourth of July, Labor Day, Fun and Feeds Day and SummerFest. A log cabin in the park was used by the community but was destroyed by the tornado of 1974.

The Lions Club used to host picnics and cook chickens over a cinderblock grill for residents to enjoy. The high school football field used to be there, and, close by (where

Fire Station No. 1 is now), was the first public swimming pool that opened in 1968. The amphitheater came after in 2004 and is used by school music groups and the Ankeny Community Band. The city uses the space now for community activities like Movies Under the Stars and Yoga in the Park.

**The Neveln building:** The first Ankeny class celebrated graduation in 1914. A few years later, in 1919, consolidation resulted in construction of the Neveln building, which served as Ankeny High School and the junior

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high school.

In 1959, an addition was constructed consisting of offices, a small gym and classrooms. The Neveln building was the high school at that time, and the Central building (the old school built in 1909 that was destroyed in the fire of 1974) was used as a junior high.

In the fall of 1964, Parkview became Ankeny High School, and the Neveln Center became a junior high. The north end that had been used as a junior high became an elementary school known as Central. In the fall of 1968, a south end addition to Neveln was opened. Most of the rooms were used for elementary students and it was considered part of Central.

"I am not sure when the building was named for Edward Neveln, superintendent from 1921-1944. But when I attended it as a junior high in 1966-1969, it was referred to as Neveln Junior High," Taylor Hutton says.

Many longtime Ankeny residents remember the Neveln building as a place where they studied, shot hoops or performed on stage. Once new schools were constructed, Neveln ceased to be used as a school. By the 1990s, the facility was renamed the Neveln Community

Resource Center and housed a number of nonprofit organizations.

As the district continued to experience rapid growth, new central offices were needed for staff. District leaders decided to use Neveln for that purpose, saving roughly \$5 million by renovating the existing structure instead of constructing a new building entirely.

The Des Moines Register reported that "a few reminders of Neveln's long history have emerged during the renovation: a hidden classroom, classic Pepsi bottles, coal remnants in what was the boiler room, old stage lights still hanging, and copies of The Des Moines Register and Tribune from 1960 stuffed into the walls."

The district held an open house to welcome community members to tour the new facility on June 20, 2003.

**Ankeny school bell:** The old school bell was originally found at the present location of the Ankeny Area Historical Museum atop what became known as "Old Central," the Ankeny School built in 1909. That school was destroyed in the tornado of 1974.

The bell was placed in front of Ankeny High School (now Parkview Middle School) in



The old Ankeny school bell currently sits outside the Ankeny Area Historical Society.

1971. V.W. Smith (Class of 1929) chaired the Ankeny Alumni Association committee to fund the move and placement in that location.

In 2020, due the widening of First Street, the Ankeny Community School District asked the Ankeny Area Historical Society to place the bell on its original location where the museum now stands. The bell was placed in May 2021. Many residents helped the bell make its move by contributing money to purchase commemorative bricks that have been placed at the base of the bell. ■

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# FINDING a home in Ankeny

Mulbrook enjoys the amenities and appreciates the schools.

Nikki Mulbrook's journey to Ankeny was a bit unexpected.

Growing up in the Waukee area, she originally saw herself living nearby, especially since her job was in Clive. Ankeny wasn't initially on her radar as a place to settle down and raise a family. But, in 2018, that all changed when she came across a charming home in Uptown. The appeal of that home and the welcoming vibe of the community drew her in, and she's been happily living in Ankeny ever since.

Over the years, Mulbrook's love for Ankeny has only grown. Although her first home was special, life's twists and turns have led her to the north side of town, where she currently rents. Mulbrook hopes to purchase another home in the near future.

"It's been great to live in a different part of Ankeny so I can get a good feel for the different neighborhoods — and schools — that Ankeny has to offer to find the perfect fit for me and my son," she says.

While she's looking forward to the features and privacy of owning her own home, Mulbrook currently enjoys all of the amenities that her apartment has to offer. There's minimal maintenance, ample parking, a fitness facility, a pool and more.

"There is an extra bonus that my son is a huge fan of," Mulbrook adds with a smile. "There are a couple of swans located in the ponds."

Mulbrook is also a fan of her current neighborhood's location. The area is bustling with new restaurants and amenities, and she likes that she can easily walk to a nearby park and her son's school. Being close to these family-friendly spaces and having a short commute to her job in Polk City makes her life easier and more enjoyable.

Beyond the neighborhood, Mulbrook sees Ankeny as one of the best communities in Iowa.

"Even though the population is well over 70,000, it sure does not feel that way at all," she says. "Ankeny offers a wide array of amenities and services, all while still maintaining that small-town feel. You never really have to leave Ankeny for anything and will always run into at least one person you know while at the grocery store."

Mulbrook especially loves Uptown Ankeny, her favorite part of the city, where she can watch the continued growth and revitalization that brings new shops and developments.

In addition to her love for the community, Mulbrook is actively involved in it. She's a dedicated member of Ankeny Young Professionals, where she has served on the board for the past three years and now holds the role of 2024 chairwoman. She is also an ambassador for the Ankeny Chamber of Commerce.

One of the biggest factors keeping Mulbrook in Ankeny is the school



Nikki Mulbrook says the Ankeny community and schools make living in the community just right for her family.

district.

"We are very fortunate to have one of the best school districts in the state of Iowa that offers a phenomenal special education department, which has been integral for us," Mulbrook says. "We are so incredibly grateful to be a part of this community." ■

# Finding balance in retirement

As you edge closer to retirement, it is common to feel a bit wobbly. Transitioning from a steady paycheck to managing income from savings and investments is daunting. It's similar to my daughter Jayce on the balance beam — one misstep can throw off everything. Just as she has to navigate her routine with precision, pre-retirees need to handle their retirement savings with care.



Watching her compete is thrilling but nerve-racking. She has one shot to execute her moves flawlessly. Similarly, in retirement, you can do many things right, but one misstep can have significant consequences. This parallel drives home the importance of having a comprehensive retirement plan.

Record inflation, fluctuating markets, and rising

health care costs can make you feel off balance. Picture sitting in a coffee shop discussing how much more a cup of coffee costs compared to a few years ago, followed by a trip to the grocery store where prices have also surged. And don't forget replacing a vehicle, which costs significantly more now than it did five years ago.

Watching your retirement accounts fluctuate wildly can be unsettling. Your 401(k) and IRA are crucial for sustaining your lifestyle, but how do you make sure they can withstand market ups and downs? How do you create a portfolio that's resilient enough to deliver consistent income despite recessions?

The latest estimates show that a 65-year-old retiring today could spend \$165,000 in out-of-pocket costs to cover medical expenses in retirement. These are only a few examples of the financial pressures pre-retirees face.

Our planning process includes developing a

long-term retirement income strategy and an "Income for Now and Income Later" plan. We help pre-retirees segment investments into different "buckets," each with specific goals. An "Income Now" bucket, invested conservatively, provides immediate income. A second bucket, with a moderate risk profile, replenishes the first. Finally, a third, longer-term growth bucket helps combat inflation and medical expenses.

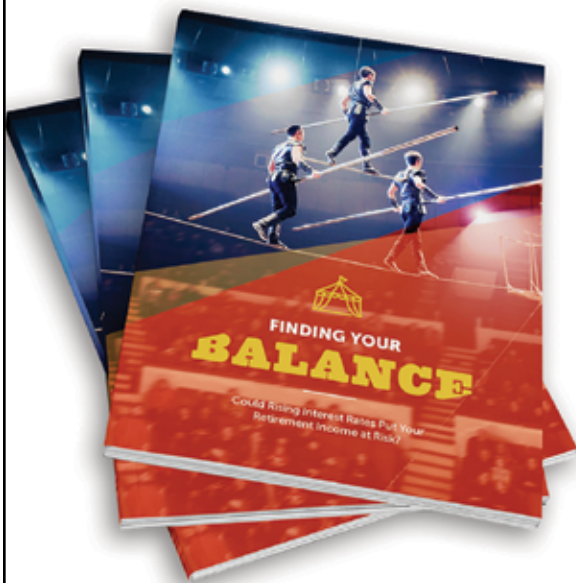
On average, recessions occur every five to six years, meaning they will likely be a part of your retirement experience, but they don't have to knock you off course. You can prepare for market volatility before it happens by building a recession-resistant portfolio that doesn't rely solely on the stock market.

To sum up, just as Jayce finds balance on the beam, you can find balance as you head to retirement with careful planning and execution. This will help you avoid missteps, stick the landing, and build a confident future.

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

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# COMMUNITY

## KARATE students to compete in world championship



Bailey Johnson, Julianna Rosendahl, Ava Rosendahl, Aidan Rosendahl, Seth Rosendahl and Kraig Rosendahl

Four students from Traditional Karate Academy, based in Des Moines, will represent the United States at the upcoming World Traditional Karate Championship in Spain. This event is the pinnacle of International Karate competitions as it brings together the four international karate federations to compete together. This elite competition will see the world's best traditional karate practitioners come together to compete for international recognition.

The students, Julianna Rosendahl, 19; Aidan Rosendahl, 17; Ava Rosendahl, 13; and Bailey Johnson, 24, qualified for the world stage after outstanding performances at the U.S. Budo Karate Association National Tournament in Arizona earlier this year, with three placing first and one placing third. The Rosendahls are from Ankeny.

Each competitor earned their place by excelling in kumite (sparring) and kata (forms) divisions, a testament to years of rigorous training and dedication at the Traditional Karate Academy under Sensei Kraig Rosendahl, a fifth-degree black belt with 50 years of training, and Sensei Seth Rosendahl, a sixth-degree black belt with 40 years of training.

"We're incredibly proud of these students," said Sensei Seth Rosendahl. "Competing on the world stage is a huge honor and reflects their hard work, discipline, and the core values we teach at our dojo. This is a significant moment not only for them but for our entire martial arts community in Des Moines." ■

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# CONSIDER tax-smart charitable gifts

As we enter the annual season of giving, you might be thinking of charities you wish to support. But you also might be wondering how to gain some tax benefits from your gifts.

It used to be pretty straightforward: You wrote a check to a charity and then deducted the amount of the gift, within limits, from your taxes. But a few years ago, as part of tax law changes, the standard deduction was raised significantly, so fewer people were able to itemize deductions. Consequently, there was less financial incentive to make charitable gifts.

Of course, this didn't entirely stop people from making them. And it's still possible to gain some tax advantages, too.

Here are a few tax-smart charitable giving strategies:

**Bunch your charitable gifts into one year.** If you combine a few years' worth of charitable gifts in a single year, you could surpass the standard deduction amount and then itemize deductions for that year. In the years following, you could revert to taking the standard deduction.

**Make qualified charitable distributions.** Once you turn 73 (or 75 if you were born in 1960 or later), you must start taking withdrawals from your traditional or inherited IRA. These withdrawals — technically called required minimum distributions, or RMDs — are taxable at your personal income tax rate, so, if the amounts are large enough, they could push you into a higher tax bracket or cause you to pay larger Medicare premiums.

But if you donate these RMDs directly to a qualified charity, you can avoid the taxes. And because these donations, known as qualified charitable distributions (QCDs), will reduce the balance on your IRA, you may have lower RMDs in the future.

Of course, if you need some or all your RMDs to help sustain yourself in retirement, the use of QCDs may not be of interest to you. Keep in mind, though, that you can start making QCDs at 70 ½, even before you must start taking RMDs. QCDs up to \$105,000 can be taken in 2024.

**Consider a donor-advised fund.** If you're interested in a long-term charitable giving arrangement, you might want to consider establishing a donor-advised fund. You can put many types of assets into this fund and then direct it to make grants periodically to the charities you've chosen. You get an immediate tax deduction for your contribution, and, if you donate appreciated assets, such as stocks, you'll avoid the capital gains taxes you would have incurred if you simply sold the stocks and then gave the money to the charities. One note of caution, though — your contributions to a donor-advised fund are irrevocable, and once the assets are in the fund, you can't use them for anything except charitable giving.

These strategies — QCDs and donor-advised funds in particular — can be complex and involve several issues of which you should be aware. So, you should consult your tax advisor before taking action. But if any of these techniques are appropriate for your situation, give them some thought — because helping a charitable group and getting tax benefits for doing so is a "win" for everyone. ■

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones. Member SIPC. Information provided by Brian Herbel, Financial Advisor, 303 S.W. Walnut St., Ankeny, IA 50023, 515-964-2323.



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# HONORING OUR LOCAL VETERANS

VETERANS DAY WAS MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2024

## DENNIS THEVENOT

Ankeny

**Military branch:** Navy Submarine Service

**Rank:** ET1 (SS)

**Service:** Served on three submarines with 14 classified deployments submerged

**How can Americans best honor veterans:**

*Just a thank you is appreciated and, on Memorial Day, take time to honor those who gave all so that we may live free.*

— Dennis Thevnot



## ELEANOR FISER

Ankeny

**Military branch:** U.S. Navy

**Rank:** Storekeeper

Second Class

**Service:** 1989-1999



## HAILEY MULLINS

Ankeny

**Military branch:** U.S. Army

**Rank:** E4

**Service:** Middle East

**How can Americans best honor veterans:**

*Exhaust every opportunity to prevent veteran homelessness. — Hailey Mullins*



## MICHAEL CASPER

Ankeny

**Military branch:** U.S. Air Force

**Rank:** CMSgt

**Service:** Germany

**How can Americans best honor veterans:**

*"It has been my honor to serve."*

— Michael Casper



## JAMES JENSEN

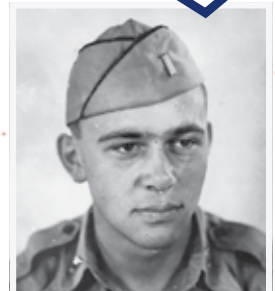
Ankeny

**Military branch:** Army

Corps of Engineers

**Rank:** 1st Lt.

**Service:** 1943-1946



# Thank you for your service!

## KENNETH WILLIAMS

**Ankeny**

**Military branch:** Marine Corps and Air Force

**Rank:** Master Sgt.


**Service:** 32 years

**What can the public do to best honor veterans:**

*The public can best honor veterans by just saying 'Thanks' and supporting organizations that provide assistance to veterans in need.*

— Kenneth Williams



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## JOHN B. LEES

**Ankeny**

**Military branch:** U.S. Marines

**Rank:** Sergeant

**Service:** West PAC 86, 88, 90, Desert Shield/Desert Storm

**How can the public best honor veterans:**

*The public can best honor veterans by remembering the sacrifice that not only veterans made but their families make as well.* — John B. Lees

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## SUE WILLIAMS

**Ankeny**

**Military branch:** U.S. Air Force

**Rank:** Master Sgt.

**Service:** 21 years

**What can the public do to best honor veterans:**

*The public can best honor veterans by recognizing women are veterans, too. Many times, when we are at events, it is geared toward men. My husband is recognized and asked about his service, but they don't ask about my service.*

— Sue Williams



**THANK YOU!**  
  
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IOWA Living MAGAZINES

# ESTATE planning for families of children with special needs

We often assist families of children with special needs with estate planning. One challenge is ensuring that the child has long-term protection. While the child is a minor, the parents have the ability to act in the child's best interest. But when the child turns 18, he or she is a legal adult. The parents can no longer get medical information, arrange for therapy or oversee finances. Luckily, there is a solution.



standby guardianship or conservatorship for a minor who is at least 17 ½ years old, which will take effect when the minor turns 18. The standby proceeding for a minor approaching the age of majority starts in probate court rather than juvenile court.

Previously, the law required the minor to turn 18 before any proceeding could commence. There was often a delay between the 18th birthday and the hearing establishing a guardianship or conservatorship. That can be detrimental to an individual who needs assistance. The new law is helpful because it allows for action before the individual turns 18.

A guardianship is often necessary and beneficial because a child with special needs will continue to need guidance even after becoming a legal adult. The guardianship will allow the guardian to continue to act as a parent — helping with housing decisions, making medical appointments and setting up

services.

The law also allows for the establishment of a conservatorship, which gives someone else (the conservator) control over the protected person's finances. A conservator can also apply for Social Security disability or Medicaid benefits for the child with special needs.

The conservatorship can stay in place if the individual will need long-term assistance in handling finances. Or, the conservatorship can terminate once a Social Security representative payee is set up.

Make sure you have all of the information you need before your child turns 18. Work with an attorney who specializes in disability law and who is on the cutting edge of the new guardianship and conservatorship law. ■

Information provided by Gail Barnett, Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm, 2560 73rd St., Urbandale, 515-278-0623, [www.ARPCLaw.com](http://www.ARPCLaw.com).

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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. Local 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. ■



Kimberly Brix



Clint Dudley



Matthew Stephenson



Meghanne Knight

**HAPPY Thanksgiving!**  
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## I AM thankful

As I was studying at my desk today, I came across a proclamation I had never read before. I had some basic knowledge about our nation's celebration of Thanksgiving, but I was unaware of President Abraham Lincoln's Thanksgiving proclamation from 1863.



I want to share an excerpt from that proclamation with you. This proclamation was written in a time of civil war:

"I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens. And I recommend to them that, while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it, as soon as may be consistent with the divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity, and union."

There are all kinds of false narratives that surround stories of the original "Thanksgiving feasts." The images many of us have in our minds of pilgrims and Native Americans having a potluck dinner on a long cafeteria table with the same stovetop stuffing your grandma made might not actually be how Thanksgiving looked on year No. 1 of the feast. Years later, as Lincoln prepared to address a nation at war, my guess is that Thanksgiving still didn't look much like a Norman Rockwell painting.

And still — in the midst of all that was happening — Lincoln wanted the nation to pause and give thanks. More than this, he had hopes that the nation wouldn't look past the harm or the pain which was presently occurring, but instead recognize the goodness of a God that was still providing blessings and mercy.

I'm actually writing this article the day after we elected a president for our nation. No matter how hopeful or hopeless you feel a few weeks later about outcomes, I wonder if the posture Lincoln proposed might fit us all. We do have much for which to be thankful. We do live in a land where freedom is so often taken for granted. We have — unknowingly and intentionally — often harmed others with things we have done or left undone.

Still, I believe God is merciful and offers to restore us (our community, our nation, our world) and offers us peace, harmony, tranquility and union.

For this — I am thankful. ■

Information provided by John Wagner, campus pastor, Christian Life Center, Ankeny First United Methodist Church, [john.wagner@ankenfirst.org](mailto:john.wagner@ankenfirst.org).

# CYBERSECURITY awareness: Banks never ask that

Every day, thousands of people fall victim to fraudulent emails, texts and calls from scammers pretending to be their bank. To promote awareness and understanding around cybersecurity, the American Bankers Association #BanksNeverAskThat campaign reminds you what information banks will and won't ask you to provide.



**10 things #BanksNeverAsk you to do:**

- Log in with a link via email
- Help with an “investigation”
- Move money to other accounts
- Take urgent action by using scare tactics
- Read back text codes on a phone call
- Verify your account password over the phone or by text
- Provide your Social Security Number over the phone or by text
- Provide your PIN number just to “verify

who you are”

- Click suspicious links or open unexpected attachments
- Provide your account number, PIN, or address during a phone call or text

Remember, don't fall for fake. Spot suspicious texts, emails and phone calls by knowing the things your bank would never ask. Visit [banksneveraskthat.com](http://banksneveraskthat.com) for extra #BanksNeverAskThat educational and interactive resources:

- Read about red flags
- Play their Scam City Game
- Take their scam quiz
- Watch scam safety videos
- Practice safe checks

**If you think you have been impacted by a phone call, text or email scam, here are a few immediate steps to take:**

1. If you gave a scammer personal information, like your SSN or bank account number, go to [IdentityTheft.gov](http://IdentityTheft.gov) to see what steps to take, including how to monitor your credit.
2. Change your password if you clicked on a

link and entered any personal information, like your username or password, into a fake site.

3. Contact your bank by calling the number on the back of your card.
4. If you lost money, file a police report.
5. File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at [reportfraud.ftc.gov](http://reportfraud.ftc.gov) or call 1-877-FTC-HELP (382-4357).

**If you have been scammed on a payment app, here are a few immediate steps to take:**

1. Notify the payment app platform and ask them to reverse the charge.
2. If you linked the app to a credit card or debit card, report the fraud to your credit card company or bank. Ask them to reverse the charge.
3. File a police report.
4. File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at [reportfraud.ftc.gov](http://reportfraud.ftc.gov) or call 1-877-FTC-HELP (382-4357). ■

Information provided by Darci Vasiljevic, VP, Bankers Trust, Ankeny Branch Manager, [DVasiljevic@BankersTrust.com](mailto:DVasiljevic@BankersTrust.com), 515-245-2934, 1925 N. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny.

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1) 25 debit transactions. A "debit transaction" for the purpose of this section means a debit to your Bonus Account that originated from an ACH, Bankers Trust bill payment, drafting checks, or use of your debit card as a method of payment or purchase. A "debit transaction" does not include debits to your Bonus Account that originated from ATM withdrawals or other debits to your Bonus Account; and

2) 2 direct deposits (ACH credits) or Express Deposits (aka mobile deposits) of at least \$200 each. A "deposit" for the purposes of this section does not include ATM deposits, deposits made in person, account-to-account transfers, or other deposits to your Bonus Account.

In addition, bonus eligibility will be verified 60 days after the Bonus Account's opening. Bonus will only be credited if the account is currently in an open status with a positive balance. Should you have met all eligibility requirements and are not subject to the limitations and exclusions contained herein, the bonus will be credited to the Bonus Account within 75 days of its opening. Limit one bonus per household. Offer not available to existing Bankers Trust checking customers or those that have had a checking account with Bankers Trust within six months of Bonus Account opening. Employees of Bankers Trust and/or its affiliates are not eligible for bonus. Offer available for a limited time. Early closing fee of \$250 will be charged if your Bonus Account is closed within 12 months of opening. Annual Percentage Yield (APY) on BreakFree Checking Plus is 0.60% for balances less than \$5,000.00 and 0.55% for balances \$5,000.00 and over, effective July 1, 2024, and subject to change without notice. Fees may reduce earnings.

# 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 and 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](http://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.

## Thai red curry chicken and rice soup

Prep time: 10 minutes  
Cook time: 20 minutes  
Servings: 6

- 6 cups chicken broth
- 2 bags Success Basmati Rice
- 1 can (14 ounces) coconut milk
- 2 tablespoons Thai red curry paste
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- 1 pound chicken breast tenders
- 2 tablespoons lime juice
- 4 green onions, thinly sliced

### DIRECTIONS

- In pressure cooker on saute setting over high heat, bring broth and rice bags to boil. Boil, uncovered, 10 minutes. Remove bags with fork and set aside.
- Add coconut milk, curry paste, soy sauce and brown sugar to pressure cooker. Turn off saute setting. Add chicken. Cover and lock to seal. Set to pressure cook setting over high heat about 10 minutes, or until chicken is tender. Carefully, manually or naturally,



release pressure according to manufacturer's instructions before removing lid.

- Set pressure cooker to saute setting over medium heat. Remove chicken and shred with two forks; add to soup along with lime juice and green onions. Remove rice from bags and stir into soup.
- Simmer until rice is heated through.



SHADE TREE AUTO

## For National Gratitude Month, We Want to Thank YOU!

At Shade Tree Auto, we want to take a moment to express our heartfelt gratitude for your trust and support. Remember those epic road trips to Grandma's house? The excitement, the laughter, and the games you played in the car—like "I Spy" and the license plate game? Those moments were some of our favorite memories in the car!

**Here's to your next road trip filled with laughter and joy—just like those unforgettable rides to Grandma's! Make a copy and play along!**

## The Alphabet Game

Spot items along the road that start with each letter of the alphabet. Check them off as you go!

<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> H	<input type="checkbox"/> O	<input type="checkbox"/> V
<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> I	<input type="checkbox"/> P	<input type="checkbox"/> W
<input type="checkbox"/> C	<input type="checkbox"/> J	<input type="checkbox"/> Q	<input type="checkbox"/> X
<input type="checkbox"/> D	<input type="checkbox"/> K	<input type="checkbox"/> R	<input type="checkbox"/> Y
<input type="checkbox"/> E	<input type="checkbox"/> L	<input type="checkbox"/> S	<input type="checkbox"/> Z
<input type="checkbox"/> F	<input type="checkbox"/> M	<input type="checkbox"/> T	
<input type="checkbox"/> G	<input type="checkbox"/> N	<input type="checkbox"/> U	



## Rainbow Drive

Search for items in the colors of the rainbow.

Start at the beginning of the rainbow, and repeat!

- |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. Red    | 5. Blue   |
| 2. Orange | 6. Indigo |
| 3. Yellow | 7. Violet |
| 4. Green  |           |



## State License Plate Lookout

Try to find all 50 states. Cross them off as you see them. For an extra challenge, go in order!

AL Alabama	HI Hawaii	MA Massachusetts	NM New Mexico	SD South Dakota
AK Alaska	ID Idaho	MI Michigan	NY New York	TN Tennessee
AZ Arizona	IL Illinois	MN Minnesota	NC North Carolina	TX Texas
AR Arkansas	IN Indiana	MS Mississippi	ND North Dakota	UT Utah
CA California	IA Iowa	MO Missouri	OH Ohio	VT Vermont
CO Colorado	KS Kansas	MT Montana	OK Oklahoma	VA Virginia
CT Connecticut	KY Kentucky	NE Nebraska	OR Oregon	WA Washington
DE Delaware	LA Louisiana	NV Nevada	PA Pennsylvania	WV West Virginia
FL Florida	ME Maine	NH New Hampshire	RI Rhode Island	WI Wisconsin
GA Georgia	MD Maryland	NJ New Jersey	SC South Carolina	WY Wyoming

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515.986.5241

**URBANDALE**  
3831 70th St.  
515.512.1095

**ANKENY**  
1329 SW Ordinance Rd.  
515.964.9492



## WHAT IS glaucoma?

Glaucoma is a common eye disease that can damage the optic nerve, resulting in loss of vision. It happens from increased pressure inside the eye, which is why we check the pressure at every eye exam. Our eye produces a fluid, aqueous humor, which needs to drain out of the eye. If the fluid is not draining out enough or too much is produced, you get a buildup of pressure inside the eye. Over time, this damages the optic nerve, which results in blind spots and possibly tunnel vision. Vision loss from glaucoma can be prevented with early treatment. The first line of treatment consists of taking eye drops daily to lower the pressure in the eye. There are other treatments such as lasers and surgeries that can be done if needed. The thing about glaucoma is you don't know you have it if you don't get your eyes checked. There are no early symptoms like pain or blurry vision to give you a clue that there is a problem. Glaucoma is hereditary, so if you have a family member who has the condition, then it's advised to get your eyes checked yearly. Also, people with diabetes are twice as likely to get glaucoma. Luckily, the disease usually progresses slowly so, as long as one gets their eyes checked, it should be easily detected and treated. ■



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

## 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](http://wesleylife.org/wellahead).

# HAPPY Thanksgiving

*We are thankful for the opportunity to serve this community!*

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Dr. Mandy Pietig, OD, Dr. Todd Pietig, OD**

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## Are you one of the **93%** of people who want to remain in your home as you age?

Over the years, you've put immeasurable thought and care into your home, and understandably, you've grown rather attached to it. But have you thought about a plan to keep you there as long as you wish?

**Introducing WellAhead** – a unique membership program designed for people who planfully intend to live at home as they age, enhancing independence and well-being while ensuring any necessary future long-term care costs are 100% covered from Day One. As a member, you'll benefit from a personal well-being coach, care coordination, and a variety of services to empower and enthusiastically enable your choice to live safely, healthfully, and independently in your own home.

To learn more about how WellAhead could be the only thing you need to stay right where you want to be, call **(515) 642-1726**.



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# EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

## Upcoming in Ankeny 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](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com) by Nov. 27 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](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com) by Dec. 22 to be included in the January issue.

## Create a gift for an animal lover

Saturday, Dec. 7, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Rustic Swan, 423 S. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny

Create a Christmas gift to remember for the animal lover in your family. Local artist Cheri Sorensen will work with you step by step to create a lasting memory from your quality photo. Cost is \$65 with all supplies included. Send your photo to Cheri by email at least one week before class. Call Rustic Swan to sign up at 515-639-0879.

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com).



## Leaf Collection Days

Through Nov. 24

Prairie Ridge Aquatic Center,  
1220 N.W. Prairie Ridge Drive

The leaf collection site is open for leaf disposal 24 hours a day. City crews will assist residents from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays only. Leaves collected in yard waste bags are permitted and may be disposed in the containers provided. Plastic bags and other containers shall be removed by the resident following leaf disposal. Find more information on the link available at [www.ankenyiowa.gov/calendar.aspx?view=li&st&year=2024&month=10&day=31](http://www.ankenyiowa.gov/calendar.aspx?view=li&st&year=2024&month=10&day=31).

## Acrylic Painting Fundraiser at Uptown Garage Brewing

Thursday, Dec. 5, 7-9 p.m.  
Uptown Garage Brewing Company, 305 S.W. Walnut St., Ankeny

Join the Ankeny Art Center at Uptown Garage for an Acrylic Painting Class Fundraiser. Cost is \$36 for all materials and step-by-step instruction on a 16-inch by 20-inch canvas. All materials are provided, no experience necessary. Painters are recommended to be 12 and older. To register, visit [www.ankenyardcenter.org/product-page/acrylic-painting-class-at-uptown-garage-1](http://www.ankenyardcenter.org/product-page/acrylic-painting-class-at-uptown-garage-1).

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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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Check for cancellations

## Irving Berlin's "White Christmas"

Dec. 6-16, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, 2 p.m.

Ankeny Community Theatre, 1932 S.W. Third St., Ankeny

Veterans Bob Wallace and Phil Davis have a successful song-and-dance act after World War II. With romance in mind, the two follow a duo of beautiful singing sisters en route to their Christmas show at a Vermont lodge where they encounter some familiar faces. With a dazzling score and beloved title song, "White Christmas" is an uplifting, wholesome musical that will delight audiences of all ages. Tickets available at [ankenycommunitytheatre.com/irving-berlins-white-christmas](http://ankenycommunitytheatre.com/irving-berlins-white-christmas).

## Watercolor Workshop with Bob Zeidler

Saturday, Dec. 7, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Ankeny Art Center, 1520 S.W. Ordinance Road

Paint a seasonal composition along with watercolorist and teacher Robert Zeidler. He has created a poinsettia design for all students to work on during this four-hour class. Organizers recommend attendees have watercolor experience and consider themselves to be intermediate or advanced students. Students will be required to bring their own basic watercolor materials (i.e. palette, pigments and brushes). Watercolor paper and painting boards/supports will be supplied by the AAC. To register, visit [www.ankenycartcenter.org/product-page/copy-of-watercolor-workshop-with-bob-zeidler](http://www.ankenycartcenter.org/product-page/copy-of-watercolor-workshop-with-bob-zeidler).

## Holiday Ho Ho Home Tour

Dec. 7, 5:30-9:30 p.m.

Around Ankeny

Tour several Ankeny homes decked out for the holidays. Each features its own unique decorations, style and appetizers. All donations benefit the Wiedenman Family Foundation, which was formed to undertake projects that will enhance Ankeny and the surrounding community. Tickets are \$25. For tickets, visit [www.hohohometour.org/event-details/tickets](http://www.hohohometour.org/event-details/tickets).

## 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 on site. [www.jesterparknaturecenter.com/calendar-events/fall-makers-market](http://www.jesterparknaturecenter.com/calendar-events/fall-makers-market)




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## Holiday Hop

Saturday, Nov. 23, from 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, artwork, 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 their 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.



## 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.



## Holiday Promenade

Fridays, Nov. 22 to Dec. 20  
Historic East Village

The Greater Des Moines Partnership and the Historic East Village Neighborhood Association will spread holiday cheer during the Holiday Promenade, an exciting, free celebration full of holiday-themed activities, entertainment, shopping and family-friendly fun. A number of activities will be scheduled throughout the five Fridays including tree lighting, a scavenger hunt, ice skating and more. During the Holiday Promenade dates, Historic East Village retailers are encouraged to remain open until 8 p.m. while restaurants and attractions are open later.

## Christmas in Olde Town

Saturday, Nov. 30

S.E. Second Street, downtown Altoona

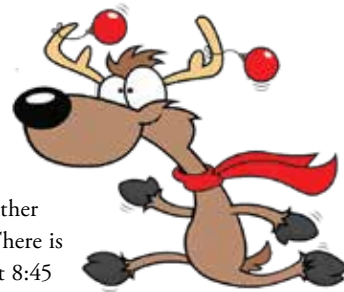
Once a year, downtown Altoona transforms into a bustling winter wonderland for Christmas in Olde Town — a celebration of the community and the holiday season. Load up your sleigh with family and friends and enjoy live music, walking tours, the annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony, a light show, and a special appearance from the Big Guy himself. Family-friendly activities start at 2 p.m. <https://altoonahistory.org/christmas>

## 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. ■



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# HOLIDAY Streakers

It's not what you think.



Ankeny Holiday Streakers board members Eric Weichers, Jim Mann, Nick May and Josh Lundahl.

As the holiday season approaches, it's time to lace up your sneakers and get ready to go Streaking.

Holiday Streakers, a unique nonprofit based in Ankeny, is gearing up for another exciting season, blending fitness with philanthropy in a unique way. Since its humble beginnings in 2012, this organization has grown from a winter running challenge into a powerful force for good, raising more than \$173,000 to support nearly 50 families facing significant medical hardships.

Streakers was born when founder Eric Weichers challenged 25 of his friends to "streak." The idea is for each person to exercise intentionally for at least 15 minutes each day during the time from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day: a streak. Weichers first read about the idea in a running magazine. This approachable goal helps keep people moving during the winter months, while also building a sense of community and accountability.

Holiday Streakers has blossomed into an organization that not only promotes health but also extends crucial financial, emotional and spiritual support to families in need. Two years after its founding, Weichers decided to start charging participants a nominal fee and use the extra funds to support a local family in need.

Each year, five to eight families are chosen as recipients after a careful nomination process that allows anyone to submit a deserving family battling medical hardships. The impact these donations have made on families in the community is nothing short of inspiring, and the organization hopes to continue expanding its reach.

Registration for this year's Holiday Streakers challenge opened on Nov. 1, and with last year's participation numbers topping 1,000 Streakers, the organization is aiming to surpass that number this year. Streaker Central, the nonprofit's online platform, makes it easy to get involved. Participants can create or join teams, log their daily exercise, track their progress and connect with fellow Streakers. This interactive space fosters not only a love for fitness but also creates lasting friendships and a strong sense of camaraderie.

In an exciting development for 2024, Holiday Streakers is partnering with Orbis, a high school program focused on project-based learning, to strengthen their connections with local businesses and increase community engagement. This collaboration is expected to open new doors for sponsorship and donations, helping to raise even more funds for the recipient families.

Those who join the Holiday Streakers challenge can stay active, connect with like-minded people and make a real difference in the lives of families facing tough times. Visit [holidaystreakers.com](http://holidaystreakers.com) for more information, and make this holiday season one of health, fitness and giving back. Happy streaking. ■

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## INSURANCE By Will Pierce

# END-OF-YEAR checklist for health insurance

As the year winds down, it's a great time for everyone to ensure their healthcare coverage is still meeting their needs. Here's a quick checklist to review:



**1. Confirm your providers are still in-network.** Medical providers can change their participation in medical networks. Double check that your doctors and specialists are still covered under your plan to avoid unexpected costs.

**2. Review out-of-pocket limits.** If you've had higher healthcare expenses this year, review your out-of-pocket limits to understand what additional costs, if any, may come up. This helps with budgeting and planning for the future.

**3. Evaluate your prescription coverage.** If you take medications, make sure they're still covered under your Part D or Medicare Advantage plan. Prescription formularies can change, and this small step could save you significantly in the year ahead.

**4. Plan for any coverage changes in 2025.** Health Insurance plans can change their benefits each year. Now is a good time to review these updates to be sure you're comfortable with any modifications that will take effect in January.

Taking a few minutes to go through this checklist can make a big difference in how prepared you feel heading into the new year. ■

Information provided by Will Pierce, owner and licensed agent, Pierce Insurance, 3211 S.E. 20th St., Ankeny, 515-257-6663, [www.pierceinsurancellc.com](http://www.pierceinsurancellc.com), [wpierceins@gmail.com](mailto:wpierceins@gmail.com).

## 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.

# It's the Medicare Annual Enrollment Period.

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# Plan Ahead for PEACE OF MIND

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# FLEXION-distraktion

## Relief for low back pain

Traction, in a variety of forms, has been used for centuries to relieve radiculopathy, sciatica and pain. One form of traction, originally called McManis Technique by the osteopathic profession, was later renamed and implemented by the chiropractic profession as flexion-distraktion.

Research studies have proven that flexion-distraktion of the lumbar spine decreases intradiscal pressure to -192 mmHg and can widen the spinal canal area where the nerves exit by up to 28%. Decreased intradiscal pressure is thought to improve tissue flow gradients, alter nociception (pain transmission) and allow retraction (recovery/repair) of prolapsed/herniated disc material. Widening the lateral canal (intervertebral foramen) where the nerves exit can alleviate nerve compression and irritation.

Flexion-distraktion is a hands-on technique that uses a specific type of hydraulic table. This technique allows the chiropractor to feel changes in muscle tension and vertebral movement. It takes many years of training to develop a feel for how much pressure to apply. Too little pressure and the tissue will not stretch enough to reabsorb the disc and open the spinal canal. Too much pressure and the patient could be sore.

Flexion-distraktion has been effective in treating disc bulge, disc herniation, degenerative disc disease, facet joint syndrome, sciatica, grade I and II spondylolisthesis and some mild to moderate cases of central and lateral canal stenosis. For patients with an acute disc herniation, traditional manipulation might be much too aggressive at first, so flexion-distraktion is often one of the only techniques that the patient may be able to tolerate.

I have been using the flexion-distraktion technique for the past 20 years. It is a skill I learned as a student intern at Palmer College of Chiropractic. I have found the flexion-distraktion technique to be invaluable in treating my patients suffering from pain. Using this conservative technique by itself or along with other therapies, I have found that my patients recover much faster than those who receive traditional chiropractic adjustments. We follow the 50% rule with our treatments. We want to see at least a 50% reduction in pain by the 12th treatment to justify continuing care with this technique. Fortunately, we often see 50% reduction of pain within the first six treatments.

If you or someone you know is suffering from back pain and have not found the relief for which you are looking, please 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](http://www.renzechiro.com) or call the office at 965-3844.



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# THANK YOU, sponsors and volunteers

'Tis the season to show your family, friends and those you love how much you appreciate and care for them. We truly appreciate the supportive business and Chamber community and wish everyone well during the holiday season.

Every year, the Chamber relies on our incredible volunteers during the Total Resource Campaign (TRC), which is an eight-week volunteer campaign to attract new members and secure business sponsors for Chamber programs, events, digital media and publications. We typically have around 25 amazing Chamber member volunteers who foster great business relationships with other members and potential members. TRC is a great way for volunteers to meet our area's top community leaders and business owners while working directly with many of the Chamber's most dedicated leadership. Volunteers assist companies with choosing options best suited to meet their marketing needs. Membership and sponsorships make it possible to raise the funds to sustain programs for business development, community improvement and member services.



The Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to the promotion and development of our members within the community. The Chamber is one of the most active and influential business organizations in the Des Moines metro. Since 1951, the Chamber has been the champion of area business and has worked tirelessly to promote our members and community. We have more than 940 businesses as members and host more than 100 events each year to promote businesses and provide educational and networking opportunities to our membership.

Sponsorships are a win-win opportunity for both the Chamber business and our organization. From a business standpoint, Chamber sponsorships are a cost-effective way to market to a business-oriented audience. The Chamber's programs, events, publications and electronic media are ideal vehicles for promoting the products and services of our business partners.

Our volunteer team is composed of some of the most successful individuals in the Ankeny area and is supported by a professional, knowledgeable staff to assist.

The campaign provides a great opportunity for the volunteers to meet other business and community leaders while improving sales and presentation skills; become knowledgeable about the important work of the Chamber; and impact community initiatives.

Without our volunteers and the sponsorships they solidify, the Chamber would not be able to offer the events and programming that we strive to provide for our members and community. We are extremely grateful for the dedication of our volunteers and members whose sponsorships make an important impact on the Chamber, while promoting their businesses.

If your business is interested in Chamber membership and sponsorship opportunities, reach out to Jamie Anderson at [janderson@ankeny.org](mailto:janderson@ankeny.org). We would be happy to connect you with a Chamber volunteer. ■

Information provided by Jamie Anderson, senior director of membership & partnership, Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce, 1360 S.W. Park Square Drive, Suites 104, 106 & 108, Ankeny, 515- 964-0685, [www.ankeny.org](http://www.ankeny.org).





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# OUT & ABOUT



Morgan Tacker, Karlie and Brandon Throckmorton at the North Ankeny Family Dentistry ribbon cutting on Oct. 22.



North Ankeny Family Dentistry held a ribbon cutting on Oct. 22.



Paul Konrad, Emily Wiederin and Ron Throckmorton at the North Ankeny Family Dentistry ribbon cutting on Oct. 22.



Brittini Bassi, Amber Milliken, Melisa Ikejic and Jesseka Kaldenberg-Leppert at the North Ankeny Family Dentistry ribbon cutting on Oct. 22.



Nate Miltenberger and Karlie Throckmorton at the North Ankeny Family Dentistry ribbon cutting on Oct. 22.



Shevaughn Moore and William Navarro at the Funky Zebras Boutique ribbon cutting on Oct. 21.



Debra Garner and Dominique Bryant at the Funky Zebras Boutique ribbon cutting on Oct. 21.



Brandy Whitehead and Terri Stanley at the Funky Zebras Boutique ribbon cutting on Oct. 21.



Brandy Whitehead, Paige Kaberka, Debra Garner, Debbie Mothershed and Jess Mercantel at the Funky Zebras Boutique ribbon cutting on Oct. 21.



The Funky Zebras Boutique held a ribbon cutting on Oct. 21.



# OUT & ABOUT



Jared and Lindsey Foss and Taylor Irwin at Lattes & Leads hosted by Real Deals on Oct. 22.



Erin Crone and Jessie Manatrey at Lattes & Leads hosted by Real Deals on Oct. 22.



Beth Barclay, Bettina Hewitt and Kayla Deighan at Lattes & Leads hosted by Real Deals on Oct. 22.



Micheal and Dejian Hidder, Ali Johnson, Emma Stern and Nicole Strom at Lattes & Leads hosted by Real Deals on Oct. 22.



Mike Intek, Ashley Yunglass and Deborah Green at Lattes & Leads hosted by Real Deals on Oct. 22.



Darryn McClurg, Drew Baedke and John Volz at the Drive Away Childhood Hunger golf event held at Talons on Sept. 26.



Hunter Warne, Michelle Book and Dennis Albaugh at the Drive Away Childhood Hunger golf event held at Talons on Sept. 26.



Shane Davis, Boone Morgan, Erica Lippincott and Matt Soden at the Drive Away Childhood Hunger golf event held at Talons on Sept. 26.



Kassidy and Matthew Small at the Drive Away Childhood Hunger golf event held at Talons on Sept. 26.



Orval Byrd and Izaah Knox at the Drive Away Childhood Hunger golf event held at Talons on Sept. 26.



Roger Ware, Tom Keck, David Weillbrenner and Dusty Ware at the Drive Away Childhood Hunger golf event held at Talons on Sept. 26.

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