

Living

A Special BOND

Local grandparents share why living close to their grandkids is so important to them.

Meet Michelle Lester
EDUCATION

Iowa KidSight vision
screenings make a difference
COMMUNITY

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CAR WRECK?



By Ryan Ellis

A car wreck caused by the negligence of another can be devastating. We have helped clients recover millions of dollars and navigate the confusing process of dealing with insurance companies.

If you or someone you know is injured in a car wreck, the first focus should be on the health of the injured person. However, you should quickly consider talking with an experienced personal injury attorney. Often, an insurance adjuster will reach out to you quickly to take a statement and offer a settlement. It is generally in the interest of the insurance company to settle a case for as little as possible. Before providing a statement or accepting a settlement, it is prudent to speak to an attorney. We can advise you in this process.

A member of our team will meet to discuss the injuries. If the injuries are serious or ongoing, it is necessary to work through treatment with your physician to make sure you are fully recovered

before settling a case. When a case is settled, the insurance company will require signature on a release form. The release form will protect them from any future problems you may have which result from or are contributed to by the negligence of the other party. In other words, you cannot recover for problems arising from the wreck after that release is signed.

If you retain our services, we usually take cases on a contingent basis. We would take an agreed upon percentage of what we recover. We collect all medical records and bills. At the appropriate time, we send what is called a demand letter to the insurance company, which includes photos of the collision and/or the injuries, a summary of damages, a description of how the life of the injured person has been negatively impacted, and a demand for settlement. We work adjusters to secure a fair settlement for the injured person.

If a settlement cannot be reached, we have trial lawyers who can take your case to a jury. Whether a case is settled or litigated in court, it can be a complex process. We empathize with our clients and keep them informed every step of the way. All decisions are made by the client, with our counsel.

The bottom line is--call an experienced personal injury attorney if you or a loved one are injured in a car wreck.

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WELCOME

A GRANDPA and his grandson

Jolene and I are new to this grandparenting thing. We are only weeks in, but, so far, so good. We had heard how wonderful the experience is from others, but, like most things in life, we didn't fully understand until we began to live it.



Our middle daughter, Samantha, got married a few years ago. She and her husband, Brady, then moved to Arizona. We missed them, and, thankfully, they missed us, too. As they began to talk about starting a family together, they came to the conclusion that they wanted to be close to family again and were moving back to the area.

We were able to see Samantha through the pregnancy process, and we were at the hospital shortly after their son was born. Holding Callahan in my arms for the first time was amazing, and doing so each time since has been as well. No phone call or video call could ever replace that.

I am greatly looking forward to the years ahead, too. Walking. Talking. Birthday parties. Ball games. And whatever he chooses to be involved in. But what I look forward to the most is the time we can spend together, just the two of us. Playing games at the kitchen table. Working on a project together in the garage. Going on boat rides. And just talking about whatever he wants to talk about.

My grandparents had all died by the time I was 5 years old, but I have a few wonderful memories of my Grandpa Lane. I can still envision him. In bib overalls. Sitting in his recliner. Looking at me and thinking how he could make me laugh. He would ask me if I wanted to see a monkey, and, of course, I always did. So I would jump up on his lap, and he would pull out his pocket watch and turn the shiny side over so I could see my reflection. And we both would giggle. I fell for that one repeatedly.

I was fortunate to be able to spend time with my grandpa, albeit not as much as I would have liked. I loved him dearly, and I want to do all I can to be sure my grandson and my future grandchildren will have those same opportunities with me.

This month, we share the stories of grandparents who live nearby their grandchildren and are able to create these types of cherished memories — and maybe see a few monkeys, too.

Thanks for reading. ■

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A Special BOND

Local grandparents share why living close to their grandkids is so important to them.



By Becky Kolosik

These days, kids often grow up, move away and start families and careers far from where they grew up. Siblings are often scattered across the country and even the globe. Dinners with the extended family is now regulated to the holidays, when those who are able make the trip “back home.” But there is something about grandkids that brings about another family shift. Many young families decide their kids would benefit from having family close by, and many grandparents find retirement is the perfect time for making a move closer to family. Some of those grandparents who live close to their grandkids share what it means to them to form the special bonds that come from time spent together.

As their grandkids, Ashton, Amelia and Gabriel, continue to grow, Chuck and Linda Myhre hope to provide moral and spiritual guidance and be positive role models for them.

A grand life

Chuck and Linda Myhre still remember Easter weekend almost 14 years ago when their daughter, Megan, and her husband, Brian, who lived in Des Moines, came to their house in Northwood with a cake decorated in baby items.

“We were so excited to find out we were going to be grandparents,” Linda says. “Being a schoolteacher, I have always loved working with kids, so knowing we would soon have a grandchild gave us so much to look forward to.”

Chuck and Linda, who will be married 55 years this April, met in high school at Northwood-Kensett. They raised their two girls — Kim and Megan — in their hometown of Northwood. Having had two daughters, Chuck was ecstatic to find out Megan was expecting a boy and couldn’t wait for all the fun things he could do with his grandson.

When Gabriel was born, Linda took a few days off from teaching to come to Des Moines and help. She and Chuck spent many weekends there, and, with each visit, it became more and more difficult to leave.

“My parents lived in the same town as we did and were very involved in our girls’ lives,” Linda recalls. “We quickly realized that we wanted to have that same relationship with our grandchildren.”

In 2014, the school district was offering a good retirement package. Although she enjoyed teaching, it seemed like God’s way of letting her know it was time to retire. Chuck decided he was ready to retire, too, so it seemed like a great opportunity to make a move to Des Moines. Not only would they get to spend more time with Gabriel, but also with another grandbaby on the way.

At the same time, the couple found out Brian and Megan were eyeing a move to Indianola so they could raise their kids in a smaller community with a great school district.

“We knew that if Brian and Megan thought Indianola was a good place to live, we would, too,” says Linda. “So, we started the process and put our house up for sale.”

They received an offer more quickly than they had planned. The couple packed up their home and rented a storage unit in Indianola, temporarily staying with Linda’s mom for six weeks until the school year ended. On the weekends, they toured homes for sale in Indianola. After an extensive search and not finding the perfect fit, they decided to build and moved in with Brian and Megan until construction was finished.



Amelia, Gabriel and Ashton love to roller skate, and the roller rink their Grandpa Chuck created in his basement provides lots of fun and entertainment.

When granddaughter, Amelia, was born in August 2014, Linda provided daycare for both Gabriel and Amelia. In 2016, Ashton was born, and she enjoyed babysitting for all three of them.

Chuck and Linda have settled in and say they enjoy everything about their life here. They enjoy the small town feel and have found a church home at Indianola Community Church, where they’ve not only made many wonderful friends, but have been involved in kids’ ministry.

These grandparents have no regrets moving closer to their grandkids, who are now in seventh, fifth and third grades. Being able to attend their music and sporting events, as well as other activities, keeps them busy. Linda reads books and helps the kids practice their instruments and piano. Chuck, also known as the “fix it grandpa,” is the family go-to when something needs fixed. He likes to play basketball and other games with the kids and even created a roller skating “rink” in their basement — complete with a disco ball — where Gabriel, Amelia and Ashton like to skate.

“I still pick the kids up from school and love to hear about their day,” Linda says. “Chuck and I both have close relationships with each of the kids, and I know they value us as much as we value them.”

The right move

Laurie Harms can’t think of anything better than being a “grammie.”

“My first-born grandchild, Rhys Patrick, was born on Jan. 13, 2014,” she says. “I drove 2.5 hours to be at the hospital and couldn’t help but marvel at the miracle of life and how perfect he was. I wrapped him up in a quilt I had sewn for him as a keepsake.”

Laurie, who lived in Algona at the time, was excited to watch Rhys grow. She spent

many weekends driving to Indianola to visit her daughter, Krystina, and her husband, Jeremy, and, of course, Rhys. Another grandson, Brantley, was born five years later, followed by a granddaughter named Harleigh.

Laurie cherished the time she was able to spend with her grandchildren. However, living nearly three hours away, she often longed to be closer and present in their daily lives.

“I wanted to be there for all their activities and events,” she explains. “When you live far away, it’s hard to develop that deep and special connection, and I also missed their sweet hugs and kisses.”

Laurie had wanted to move closer to her daughter’s family in Indianola, but she had a job and responsibilities in Algona. However, everything changed in early 2024 when she decided she wanted to retire. That meant she could finally start seriously considering a move.

Her official retirement was planned for June, and there were a lot of pieces that needed to fall into place. When a house that fit her needs came on the market in Indianola, she made an offer.

“My company allowed me to work semi-remotely,” Laurie explains. “My job also required some travel, so it was a bit challenging. There was a lot of driving, but I was able to make it work for those last few months.”

Now that her home in Algona is sold, she still makes regular trips up north to visit her parents in Buffalo Center. However, she likes living in Indianola because it has a small community feel as well as vibrant retail, business and entertainment. She appreciates the proximity to Des Moines, and particularly the airport, because it makes for easy travel to Washington, D.C., to visit her son, Jeremy, his wife, Katie, and her fourth grandchild, 7-month-old Zachary.



Laurie Harms is grateful to live close to three of her grandchildren, Harleigh, Brantley and Rhys, so she can be present in their day-to-day lives.

Living here has allowed Laurie to spend quality time with Rhys, Brantley and Harleigh. She's able to attend their school events, sporting activities, recitals and concerts.

"I love being their biggest cheerleader, and it's wonderful to be able to invest in their lives and make memories," Laurie says. "I was fortunate to grow up next door to my grandmother and know how much that meant to me."

Being with her grandchildren gives her joy and purpose. Laurie enjoys the sweet, simple moments and visits throughout the week to do things with the kids, such as going out for breakfast, taking walks or playing in the park. She likes to babysit or pick them up from school. The kids are excited to dig into Grammie's craft box or play games and put puzzles together. She also likes volunteering at Strong Roots where Brantley goes to school.

Laurie also finds time for herself. She has met new friends at the Wellness Campus, in her line-dancing class at the Activity Center, and at Indianola Community Church, where she attends regularly with her daughter's family.

She feels blessed to have close relationships with her grandkids here, and, even though she's far away from Zachary, Laurie visits as often as she can and looks forward to watching him grow.

"I hope all my grandchildren know how much I love them and that they can always feel comfortable coming to me with their joys and concerns," she says. "At this stage of my life, being near family gives me peace. It's good to know I will not be alone and that I have someone there to help me if and when I need it."

A new chapter

Barb Shultz says she was blessed to have wonderful grandparents. Growing up, she lovingly referred to her maternal grandmother as "Little Mommy." She also remembers her grandparents on her father's side making her clothes out of flour sacks.

"Back then, we often had to live simple and make do with what we had," Barb says. "We didn't have luxuries, and the flour sack clothes were not always pretty, but I was always thankful for what my grandparents did for me."

Barb's grandparents significantly shaped her understanding of what it meant to be a good grandparent. They instilled values, taught her important life lessons, and exemplified a strong grandparent/grandchild relationship. Because of that, she knew she wanted close relationships with her grandchildren someday.

So, when Barb and her husband, Marv, became grandparents for the first time 40 years ago, they were excited.

"But every grandchild that joined our family after that was just as exciting as the first," Barb says. "We always wanted to guess the gender, and I have to brag because this grandma was always right."

Barb enjoys children, and she and Marv opened their home to their children and grandchildren if they needed a place to stay. They also cared for foster children. When Marv retired from his career as a health and safety security officer for the state of Iowa, he felt called to the ministry, and he and Barb eventually moved to Galesburg, Illinois, to pastor a church.

In 2022, the couple decided to move back to



Barb Shultz, pictured with 2-year-old Kymber, has found purpose and satisfaction in helping raise some of her grandchildren over the years.

Iowa and settled in Lacona to be close to their grandkids who lived in Newton, Des Moines and Knoxville. However, in 2023, life changed forever when Marv unexpectedly passed away after an illness complicated some already pre-existing health conditions.

"Lacona was supposed to be our forever home," Barb says. "We had recently welcomed our youngest grandchild, Kymber, and we had so many plans now that we were officially retired."

In the fall of 2024, Barb and her son, Kirk, decided to buy a house together in Indianola, and 2-year-old Kymber would also be living with them.

"To say that my family saved my life after losing Marv is an understatement," she says. "I am so thankful that Kymber knew her 'Brampa' before he left us. He loved all his grandchildren, and I love to hear our oldest grandson, who is now 40, say he owes a lot of what he learned about life and work ethic from his grandpa."

Barb takes care of Kymber a couple of days a week when her dad is at work or when she is not with her mom or at daycare.

"Watching her grow and change is so much fun, and she has been my lifesaver since Marv passed away," Barb explains. "When she was around 1, Kymber would go to grandpa's chair and jabber to him. The only word we could understand was 'Brampa,' but she knew that was where grandpa sat."

This past Christmas, Barb gave each of the grandkids — old and young — a toy tractor from Grandpa's prized collection. There are so many memories of sleepovers, camping, parades, family reunions, and holiday celebrations together.

"Living close to my grandchildren is a blessing," she says. "I believe children and grandchildren are gifts from God, and I'm thankful for all of mine." ■

GARDENING in this 'in-between' month

February: that interesting month between the cold, dark, frigid temps of January and the warming breezes, melting and bright days of March. What to do in the garden? Many of us are ready to get outside and begin to emerge from winter hibernation, but what can we do in this "in-between" month?



Take a walk around the garden to check out your beds, trees and shrubs. Look for damage from rabbits, voles and deer. If you find damage on trees and shrubs that you may not have protected last fall, take time to put chicken wire cages around those damaged trees and shrubs now, and make a note for next year to be sure to protect them. Check any late plantings of perennials, shrubs and trees for possible frost heave. A new layer of mulch spread around these will help keep them safe until spring.

Now is a good time to prune trees and shrubs while they are dormant, but do not prune any spring bloomers, since you will be pruning off this year's blooms. These include lilacs, magnolias, redbuds, azaleas and rhododendrons. However, maples, oaks and other non-flowering trees are great candidates for pruning, since you can see the structure of the tree without leaves.

Have any spring bulbs from last fall that didn't get planted? (Yes, we have some, so don't be embarrassed.) If the frost comes out of the gardens, take some time to plant them now. The ground is still cool enough to help cold treat them for blooming or growth for next spring.

There are things to do indoors as well. Remember the elephant ear bulbs, canna and dahlia tubers you dug up and put in storage? Now is the time to inspect and make sure they are still looking good. If you find any that are getting soft spots or showing decay, throw them away. Some loss is normal during storage. It also gives you a chance to buy some new varieties this spring.

Starting seeds for your gardens this spring? Now is the time to gather your supplies: trays, medium and seeds. Check out the nurseries, garden centers, catalogs and internet for really interesting new and different seeds. Get your calendar out and start marking when each needs to be started so you can plant out this spring. Remember, those cool flowers and veggies can be entered into the Warren County Fair the end of July in the open Flower and Vegetable classes.

Did you bring in any pots with plants that are marginally hardy into the unheated garage? Check and see if the soil is drying out. If they need some moisture, use some ice cubes instead of water. The ice cubes melt slowly and provide even moisture without running right through the pot.

Take the opportunity this month to get outside again and begin enjoying your garden. Have fun in the garden dreaming of those sunny and warm days of spring and summer just around the corner. ■

Information provided by Barry Laws, co-owner, Quilted Gardens Nursery and Landscaping, 19635 130th Ave., Indianola, 515-720-3089, www.quiltedgardens.com.

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CONVERTING savings to retirement income

During your working years, you've probably set aside funds in retirement accounts such as IRAs, 401(k)s, or other workplace savings plans, as well as in taxable accounts. Your challenge during retirement is to convert those savings into an ongoing income stream that will provide adequate income throughout your retirement years and that works in unison with any pension or social security benefits.



and you might not enjoy your retirement years as much as you could. Your withdrawal rate is especially important in the early years of your retirement, as it will have a lasting impact on how long your savings last.

Which assets should you draw from first?

You may have assets in accounts that are taxable (e.g., CDs, mutual funds), tax deferred (e.g., traditional IRAs), and tax free (e.g., Roth IRAs). Given a choice, which type of account should you withdraw from first? The answer is — it depends.

You need to coordinate your retirement planning with your estate and tax plan. For example, if you have appreciated or rapidly appreciating assets, it may be more advantageous for you to withdraw from tax-deferred and tax-free accounts first. This is because these accounts will not receive a step-up in basis at your death, as many of your other assets will.

However, this may not always be the best strategy. For example, if you intend to leave your entire estate to your spouse, it may make

sense to withdraw from taxable accounts first. This is because spouses are given preferential tax treatment with regard to retirement plans. A surviving spouse can roll over retirement plan funds to his or her own IRA or retirement plan, or, in some cases, may continue the deceased spouse's plan as his or her own. The funds in the plan continue to grow tax deferred, and distributions need not begin until the spouse's own required beginning date.

The bottom line is that this decision is also a complicated one. A financial professional can help you determine the best course based on your individual circumstances. ■

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RIDE share and food delivery

Make sure you are covered.

In recent years, there has been an explosion in the ride share and food delivery industry. Often, those who enter the field use their personal automobiles to make food deliveries or transport passengers. This situation may raise a number of thorny issues when an accident involving the vehicle occurs.

The two main types of coverage in an auto policy include liability coverage (for injuries caused to others by the policyholder) and uninsured/underinsured motorist coverage (for injuries sustained by the policyholder caused by an at-fault party). Both coverages may be subject to exclusions when one is using a personal vehicle for commercial pursuits.

Liability insurance: For decades, personal liability auto policies have had exclusions for bodily injury or property damage arising out of the use of a vehicle to carry persons for a charge. More recent policies expand the exclusions to include retail or wholesale delivery, including the pick up, transport or delivery of magazines, newspapers, mail or food; or for ride-sharing activity.

Generally, such exclusions have been upheld on the basis that the risks associated with vehicles used to carry paying passengers for a set fee do not come within the risks covered by personal auto policies. See e.g. Johnson v. Allstate, 505 So.2d 362, 367 (Al 1987).

Observation: Because of the above-described exclusions, some of the larger ride share and food delivery companies are buying liability insurance policies to cover accidents caused by their drivers. However, not all such businesses provide such coverage, and one would be wise to make sure there is adequate liability insurance available in the event of an accident.

Uninsured/underinsured motorist insurance: This coverage is intended to protect the policyholder who is injured by an at-fault driver. In light of the high price of insurance, our roads are filled with drivers carrying minimal limits of insurance coverage (or no insurance at all). If an accident occurs with such a driver, the only source of compensation may be the policyholder's uninsured or underinsured motorist coverage.

As with liability policies, however, these policies often contain exclusions relating to bodily injury sustained when carrying persons or property for a fee, delivery of food or ride-sharing activities.

Observation: It appears that the large ride-share and delivery businesses generally are not purchasing uninsured/underinsured motorist policies for their drivers. This may be because the liability policies are designed to protect the businesses from exposure and the uninsured/underinsured policy is for the driver's sole benefit. In order to ensure that there is adequate protection, a ride-share or delivery driver should speak to his or her insurance agent to purchase this coverage if the unexpected or unthinkable happens. ■



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MORE than meets the eye

Iowa KidSight vision screenings make a difference.

Did you know that one in three young children have poor vision that can be easily corrected with eyeglasses? But that is not the whole story. Sometimes, preschool age children may also have other visual conditions that affect the way they see. One of the most common is amblyopia (lazy eye) where one eye doesn't develop the same as the other. It needs to be detected and treated by age 6 to have the best outcomes.

"Kids usually don't know that they can't see well," says Dr. Ashley Valencic, "If a child cannot see clearly, they have difficulty in school — especially when it comes to learning to read."

That's where Iowa Lions and Iowa KidSight make a difference.

Valencic, an optometrist, was at a continuing education conference at the University of Iowa when she was asked to serve on the KidSight board. She said yes and connected with the local Lions clubs.

Indianola Evening Lions have been an integral part of the joint project between Lions Clubs of Iowa and the Department of Ophthalmology & Visual Sciences at the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital since approximately 2005. The goal is early detection and treatment of vision impairments in children 6 months to approximately age 6 through screening and public education.

The first generation of vision screening cameras used older film-based technologies that required manual interpretation of the photos.

"Our first cameras were Polaroid type," says Jo Richey from Evening Lions. "We took two pictures and then had to determine if they were acceptable and retake if necessary. The photos were sent to Iowa City to be diagnosed by the KidSight staff."

Cameras and technology have come a long way, and everything is now done electronically. Several years ago, Evening Lion Martin Bishop initiated the process of writing a grant with Warren County Philanthropic Partnership for



Indianola Lions provided vision screenings at last year's ICYF Trunk or Treat. From left: Jo Richey, Glen Cowan, Angie Banks, Anita Allen and Dr. Ashley Valencic.

half the cost of a new camera. The other half was fundraised and/or gifted by other Lions clubs so that the camera could be purchased and shared by the Indianola, Norwalk and Carlisle clubs.

Dave Tanner, an Indianola Noon Lions Club member, learned about KidSight after a conversation with his uncle Don McComb of the Lions in Whitewater, Wisconsin, a club that has been screening kids for more than 20 years. Dave contacted the Evening Lions and started shadowing on screenings and soon went through the training to be able to do screenings himself. Several other noon club members have also taken an interest in the program, and the club officially took over KidSight in January when the evening club became inactive.

"The Evening Lions dedicated much time and effort into serving kids and families here in Indianola," says Tanner, who is chair of the Noon Lions KidSight committee. "I know

that, with the help of Dr. Ashley, we can have a positive impact. Our goal is to have no children in Warren County left unscreened and to not have something treatable missed." ■

Iowa KidSight has a simple, safe, touchless screening that can detect risk factors for lazy eye or other conditions in less than 1 second in a cooperative child.

Goals of Iowa KidSight:

- Objectively screen vision in infants and young children throughout all of Iowa's 99 counties — for free.
- Educate the public about the risk of undetected vision loss.
- Identify ways to sustain vision screening programs of this type.

IMPORTANCE of preventative maintenance

Regular preventative scheduled maintenance is one of the most important things you can do to ensure your auto runs smoothly and safely. Neglecting your car's maintenance requirements can lead



to serious problems and costly repairs. This is even more important if you drive a performance-designed vehicle. We see it often in the shop. Oh, how many times I have uttered the words while performing a retroactive repair, "If only they would have followed the maintenance schedule and just replaced that belt 4,000 miles ago..." Now the cylinder head needs to be rebuilt, and the cost of the repair tripled.

The following adage always holds true, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." The five major benefits to regular scheduled maintenance are:

Increased longevity: Regular car maintenance significantly increases your vehicle's lifespan. Performing tasks such as oil services, fluid changes, and tire rotations contributes to

a longer service life for your vehicle. Neglecting these items can lead to premature wear on your car, resulting in costly repairs or even undesirable roadside emergencies.

Improved vehicle performance: Regular maintenance enhances performance. When the components of your car — such as the intake valves, spark plugs and fuel injectors — are well-maintained and functioning properly, your vehicle operates more smoothly and efficiently. This leads to better fuel mileage, improved handling and a more enjoyable driving experience.

Increased vehicle safety: Neglecting your vehicle's maintenance can lead to breakdowns or malfunctions while you're driving. This not only puts you and your passengers at risk but also endangers other drivers on the road. By ensuring your vehicle is well-maintained, you reduce the likelihood of accidents and promote safety for yourself and others.

Repair cost savings: Although it may seem counterintuitive, regular scheduled maintenance can save you money in the long run. By addressing minor issues before they escalate into major repairs, you can avoid expensive costs

at inopportune times. Furthermore, a well-maintained car is likely to have a higher resale value than one that has been neglected.

Peace of mind: Regularly scheduled maintenance is essential for peace of mind. Knowing that your car is well-maintained and in excellent condition allows you to travel with confidence and security. You won't have to worry about unexpected breakdowns or other issues that may arise from neglecting your car's maintenance needs.

Scheduled maintenance is crucial for all car owners, regardless of the vehicle's make. Performing routine tasks such as oil services, filter replacements, tire rotations, wiper blade changes, and fluid top-offs can help extend your car's lifespan, enhance its performance, increase safety, save you money, and provide peace of mind while driving. Always consult your car's owner's manual or a trusted specialist for guidance on your vehicle's specific maintenance requirements. ■

Information provided by Chris Werner, owner and lead technician, Werner's Elite Auto, 506 1/2 E. Euclid Ave., Indianola, 515-259-0122, www.wernerseliteauto.com.

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NO BETTER Valentine gift than well-being at home

Stephanie, 70, has lived in her townhome in Urbandale for nearly 30 years and hopes to remain there, but her two sons are worried. Stephanie is healthy, but if she were to need assistance at some point,

her sons can't always provide immediate help, as one lives out of state and the other travels for work.

Stephanie's sons' concerns are reasonable; staying in our homes independently as we age is not always possible. Health challenges can make living independently ill-advised, and full-time assistance at home is expensive.

So, you may be asking yourself, on your own behalf or on behalf of someone you love: "If moving into a community for older adults is not a desired option and there are concerns about health or independence issues, what can



I do?"

Consider a continuing care at home (CC@H) membership. Usually administered by an organization that serves older adults, a CC@H program is designed to help people proactively focus on their health at home while planning for potential services and care down the road.

If you're interested in looking into such a program, make sure to ask specifically what it 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 before you join a program:

- **Does the program feature personal support?** Studies show people who embark on a life-enriching program or activity will be more likely to succeed with encouragement from a trusted adviser, advocate, or coach.

- **Does it include care costs?** A solid program will help pay for your care, if it's needed, whether through home healthcare or services in a community later on.

- **How long has the organization that's backing the program been in business, and what's its reputation?** 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 continuing care at home programs are created equal! If a specific one 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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New! New! And more news!



The Village is growing in beautiful and exciting ways! We're making room for more, offering:

- 28 new independent living apartments – and reservations are currently being accepted with the remaining inventory limited!
- A community room addition to our main building
- Enhanced dining venues
- Plans for other amenities – including outdoor dining, raised garden beds, and a dog park – are in the works!
- Revamped wellness area with weight gym and yoga room
- More “pampering” services with an improved hair salon that can also offer manicures, pedicures and massage
- Renovation to our long-term care households that includes all private suites and private half baths
- A refresh to our current Aspen independent living building common areas

Explore The Village at an upcoming event.

Galentine's Night: Friday, February 14 at 4:30 p.m.

Round up your gal pals for a fabulous Girls' Night Out of sipping and socializing!

Des Moines Playhouse: Monday, February 24 at 1 p.m.

Join us for a lively, old-time radio show filled with humor, drama and nostalgia!

To RSVP for one or both events, contact Amber at (515) 961-0878 or amcdonald@wesleylife.org.



The Village
A WESLEYLIFE COMMUNITY



TACKLE wellness goals by adding a touch of green

Better-for-you recipes inspired by savory salad kits

(Family Features) Around the start of a new year, many people are setting their wellness intentions, from incorporating a variety of greens into meals to boosting daily step goals, drinking more water and practicing gratitude.

As part of the journey, it's important to rethink nutrition and your recipe repertoire to include better-for-you meals. For example, you can satisfy seafood cravings while getting your protein fix with Italian Crusted Salmon with Creamy Truffle Caesar Salad. This one-pan solution is paired with a Fresh Express Twisted Creamy Truffle Caesar Chopped Salad Kit, inspired by high-end dining experiences with flavors that transport you to the finest restaurants around the world.

The kit allows you to indulge in crunchy garlic brioche croutons paired with garden fresh crispy romaine lettuce, delicate sprinkles of truffle Parmesan cheese shreds and creamy dressing, transforming every bite into a sensation to be savored.

Visit freshexpress.com to discover more than 380 fresh recipes and find a store near you. ■

Italian crusted salmon with creamy truffle Caesar salad

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

Servings: 2

- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 2 teaspoons chopped, fresh rosemary
- 1/2 teaspoon honey
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons panko breadcrumbs
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped walnuts
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 2 salmon fillets
- nonstick cooking spray
- 1 bag (9.3 ounces) Fresh Express Twisted Caesar Creamy Truffle Caesar Chopped Kit Salad
- 2 lemon wedges (optional)

DIRECTIONS

- Heat oven to 425 F. Line sheet pan with parchment paper.
- In small bowl, combine garlic, lemon juice, rosemary, honey and salt. In another small



bowl, combine breadcrumbs, walnuts and olive oil.

- Place salmon on prepared sheet pan. Spread mustard mixture over fish; sprinkle with panko mixture, pressing to adhere. Lightly coat with nonstick cooking spray.
- Bake 12-15 minutes, or until fish flakes easily with fork.
- Place greens from salad kit in large bowl. Drizzle with dressing; mix well.
- Evenly divide salad among two plates. Top with salmon. Serve each with lemon wedge, if desired.

Grilled zucchini nachos

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 8 minutes

Servings: 4

- 4 medium zucchini, sliced into 1/4-inch thick rounds
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 bag (5 ounces) Fresh Express Sweet & Crunchy Salad Blend
- 1 cup canned corn, cooked and drained
- 1 cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup tomato, diced
- 1/4 cup green onions
- 1/4 cup red onions
- 1 jalapeno, finely diced (optional)
- 1 avocado, diced
- 1/4 cup cilantro, chopped
- 1 tablespoon sour cream

DIRECTIONS

- Heat grill to medium heat.
- In large bowl, toss zucchini and olive oil to coat. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.
- Place zucchini on grill pan; grill 4-5 minutes until just tender. Top zucchini with cheese and cook until cheese melts, 1-2 minutes.



- Remove from grill and place on plate or large platter. Top cheesy grilled zucchini with salad blend; corn; black beans; tomato; green and red onions; jalapeno, if desired; avocado; cilantro; and sour cream.

PONDERING history

Elodie Opstad gives readers a glimpse of Warren County.

When Elodie Opstad sees her new book, “This is the Place: Glimpses of Warren County” on the shelf at independent bookstores like Pageturners, she can’t help but look back on the journey that brought her here.

Opstad credits her interest in history and research to an eighth-grade teacher.

“Mr. Eiler was a terrific teacher who imparted the fundamentals of research to his students,” she recalls. “His lessons stuck with me, and I have applied them at various times throughout my life to many topics, subjects and fields of study.”

Writing was not Opstad’s career choice. She came to Indianola in the 1970s to study biology at Simpson College — never taking an English or history class. After graduation, she worked in healthcare and eventually landed in the health insurance industry where she wrote contracts, created marketing materials, and responded to proposals.

“Writing for work was a specific style and scope,” she says. “After retiring, I knew I wanted to do something more with the skill, so I took an all-day writing course in 2011, which led me to join a writers’ group, and I started writing.”

After a few years of writing random pieces and gaining some confidence, Opstad approached Amy Duncan, editor of the Record-Herald & Tribune newspaper about a column focused on local history called “PastTimes.” Three years later, she started writing for Duncan’s new online publication, the Indianola Independent-Advocate. She restructured the content and eventually renamed the column.

“I wanted the articles to be connected, so I decided words ending an article would also begin the next,” she explains “I didn’t know if that challenge would create a roadblock where I’d be stumped and unable to find a story, but that never happened, and I just kept writing.”

The “Unbroken Line of Pondering” is an opinion piece, where she can interpret history and tell stories with a bit of attitude or opinion.

When Opstad thought about publishing a book, the process was intimidating and overwhelming. But, after compiling all her articles from six years into one document, she was amazed at how that created a new perspective and ultimately shaped her understanding, comprehension and awareness of those times. She began researching all she needed to know about self-publishing and dived in, hiring an outside copy editor and cover designer who also helped with interior formatting.

The result? A book that shares in her joy of finding ordinary people lost to time but worthy of remembering. They are people you won’t find in a history book, and bringing them forward into the light shows that they were heroes.

“These same kinds of people walk among us today,” Opstad says. “They are everywhere — and not just in Indianola and Warren County.”

“This Is The Place: Glimpses of Warren County” is available from independent bookstores and book sellers (Amazon, Barnes & Noble, etc.) for \$14.99. All earnings are donated to the Warren County Historical Society & Museum. ■



Local historian and author Elodie Opstad hopes that people who read her new book will smile at the stories, learn about the past, see a relationship between then and now and pause and ponder.



HPV can cause 6 types of cancers

Getting the HPV vaccine is one of the best ways to prevent these cancers.

The CDC recommends the HPV vaccine for children as young as 9 and for people up to age 26 if not vaccinated when younger.

Ask your healthcare provider about the HPV vaccine



Health and Human Services

Source: National Cancer Institute cancer.gov

Check for cancellations

Upcoming in Indianola Living magazine:

Foreign Exchange Students: Have you hosted a foreign exchange student in the past or are hosting one this year? Tell us about sharing your home and culture with a student from abroad and what you learned from the experience. Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com to be included in the April issue.

Money Smart Workshop: Empowering Financial Literacy for All

Thursdays, Feb. 27, March 6 and March 13, 6-7:30 p.m.
Warren County ISU Extension and Outreach office

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach announces the upcoming Money Smart workshop, designed to enhance financial literacy and equip participants with essential money management skills. This is a free series of three workshops.

In today's fast-paced world, understanding personal finance is more important than ever. The Money Smart workshop aims to provide practical tools and knowledge on budgeting, saving, investing, and navigating credit. Whether you're a student, a young professional, single parent or someone looking to refresh your financial skills, this workshop is tailored for all levels.

Attendees will receive valuable materials to help continue their financial education at home. Registration is required at <https://go.iastate.edu/ZFUOII> or contact Bethany at bcecot@iastate.edu or call 515-961-6237.

Contra Dances and Storytelling

Saturdays, Feb. 15, March 15, April 19 and May 17

First United Methodist Church,
307 W. Ashland Ave., Indianola

Indianola Community Contra Dances are from 7-10 p.m. Storytelling will be held from 5:30-6:30 prior to the dances.

Sisterhood Night

Friday, Feb. 28

Indianola First Assembly of God Church, 1700 W. Second Ave.

Organizers invite the public for an unforgettable evening of encouragement, connection and sisterhood fun. Jennifer Dukes Lee will be the guest speaker. She is a storyteller and grace dweller who has devoted her life to sharing the Good News through her inspiring stories of God's unrelenting grace. She is an accomplished author, journalist and speaker, known for her books "It's All Under Control," "The Happiness Dare," "Love Idol" and "Growing Slow." Register for this free women's event at <https://indianola1st.churchcenter.com/unproxy/registrations/events/2679828>.

Hy-Vee Special Friends Winter Formal

Friday, Feb. 21, 6-7:30 p.m.

Indianola Activity Center, 2204 W. Second Ave.

All individuals with special needs and their families, chaperones, respite providers and SCL workers are invited to attend this free drop-in event with dancing, fun and pizza provided by Indianola Hy-Vee.



Beginning Vegetable Gardening

Tuesdays, April 15-29, 7-8 p.m.

Indianola Activity Center, 2204 W. Second Ave.

Master Gardener Sue Thompson teaches how to grow veggies in containers or a corner of your yard, with tips on soil preparation, planning, planting, critter control and harvesting. Fee: \$11. Register for the class by Tuesday, April 1. Call Indianola Parks and Recreation at 515-961-9420.

Afternoon Adventures: Unconditional Surrender: A Visit with Ulysses S. Grant

Tuesday, Feb. 18 at 1 p.m.

Indianola Activity Center, 2204 W. Second Ave.

Author and performer Pete Grady presents this one-man show about the life and times of Ulysses S. Grant, Civil War general and 18th president of the United States. This event is funded by Humanities Iowa, a private, non-profit state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The free speaker series is sponsored by Community 1st Credit Union and hosted by Indianola Parks and Recreation.



Tuesday Tunes & Treats: Been There, Done That

Tuesday, March 11 at 1 p.m.

Indianola Activity Center, 2204 W. Second Ave.

Tom Peterson, Roger Young and David Pitt bring smiles and good vibes with their jokes and a variety of music. The free concert is hosted by Indianola Parks and Recreation and is sponsored by Mark Miracle with American Republic Insurance Services. Dessert provided by Indianola Hy-Vee.

Meet the author

Various dates

Elodie Opstad has recently published a new book "This is the Place," which contains stories from Warren County's history. The book is available at Page Turner's bookstore in Indianola and on Amazon. She is donating proceeds from the book to the Warren County Historical Society. There are several opportunities coming soon to meet the author and purchase a signed copy.

- Tuesday, Feb. 25: Carlisle Library at 6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday March 25: Norwalk Library at 1:30 p.m.

VITA offers income tax help

Get your taxes done for free with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. Boost your family's income with the earned income tax credit or child tax credit if you qualify. Some guidelines apply. Learn more by visiting www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/vita.

Check for cancellations

WCHS Soup Supper and General Meeting

March 26, 6 p.m.

Warren County Historical Society

The Warren County Historical Society's Soup Supper and General Meeting will include officer election and strategic planning with Genna Thompson. The soup supper is a freewill offering event. The public is invited to share ideas and suggestions for developing the historical society's current facilities, resources and property management.



Kling displays art in Grimes

Through Feb. 26

Grimes Public Library, 200 N.E. Beaverbrooke Blvd., Grimes

"Welcome to My Gardens" is an exhibit of oil paintings by Indianola Artist Bob Kling on display at the Grimes Public Library. Eighteen of Kling's paintings are on display and were created during the last four years. The show features work created from Kling's flower and vegetable gardens and from the produce department at Hy-Vee Grocery when the gardening season was over. "Although I paint everything from figures, portraits, landscapes, seascapes, hot air balloons, cars, trucks, motorcycles and still life, each has their own distinct characteristics which I enjoy — the personalities of people, the reflections of objects in water, the rippling folds in fabric or the dappling of shadows and sunlight through the trees. But there is something special about working from your own garden. When gardening, you discover all sorts of bugs, insects, butterflies, caterpillars and other living things. I like to have the viewers of my paintings also discover these same things." The exhibit is free and open to the public during the Grimes Public Library hours from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Bob Kling's painting and pottery studio is located in Indianola. His webpage is www.bobklingart.com.



CITYVIEW'S Chocolate Walk

West Glen Town Center, 5465 Mills Civic Parkway, West Des Moines

chocolatewalk.dmcityview.com

Feb. 21, 5-9 p.m.

CITYVIEW and West Glen Town Center once again bring the Chocolate Walk to West Glen Town Center on Friday, Feb. 21 from 5-9 p.m. For a ticket price of \$25 (\$35 at the door), attendees will receive 10 drink tickets that can be redeemed for sample cocktails at participating venues. Participating establishments are Wellman's, Anna Dolce, Shotgun Betty's, Grimaldi's, The Irish, Tonic, El Fogon, The Breakfast Club, Coach's Pizza and Hurts Donut. ■



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THE EFFECTS of hearing loss on the spouse

If you are suffering from hearing loss, you're not alone. While an estimated 36 million American adults experience some degree of hearing loss, those closest to you — your immediate family — are affected even if they don't share your hearing impairment. Your spouse, in particular, may have a difficult time dealing with your hearing loss.



Many spouses complain of a lack of communication. They resent having to repeat themselves and adopt strategies such as positioning themselves in front of their husband or wife when speaking, encouraging lip reading and relying on handwritten notes. The big effect is on everyday activities, mainly television and telephone use. Spouses must deal with increased volume when the TV is on, making it uncomfortable for them to watch television in the same room. They also tend to be the ones to answer and make all telephone calls. There is also a reduction in social activities, with the hearing-impaired partner more likely to want to stay at home rather than venture out and put him or

herself in a potentially uncomfortable situation.

Naturally, these factors lead to resentment and put a strain on the marriage. Increased tension often leads to a lack of intimacy, causing serious damage to the relationship.

If you are hearing impaired and married, there are steps you can take to improve your relationship with your spouse and ease his or her burden. If you own hearing devices, use them. And if you don't, speak with your audiologist to see if they will help. There is a direct correlation between hearing device use and relationship satisfaction. Of equal importance: Accept your condition rather than wallowing in self-pity or despair. Nobody wants to have difficulty hearing, but dealing with it in a positive manner can go a long way toward maintaining a solid marriage. When you accept your impairment, your spouse is more willing to help, and it's easier for both of you to adapt to the situation. ■

Information provided by Dr. Kelly Cook, audiologist, Iowa Hearing Center, 1228 Sunset Drive, Suite B, Norwalk, 515-416-5990.

Honey I think you need to get your hearing checked.

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Kelly Cook, Au.D., CCC-A
Doctor of Audiology



ACUPUNCTURE and Seasonal Affective Disorder

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a form of depression that typically occurs in the winter months when daylight hours are shorter. This condition affects millions of people globally, leading to symptoms such as fatigue, sadness, irritability and a loss of interest in usual activities. While light therapy and antidepressants are commonly used to treat SAD, acupuncture is emerging as a complementary therapy that shows promising results.



SAD is thought to be linked to changes in the body's internal clock, or circadian rhythm, which is influenced by the reduction in sunlight. The lack of light can disrupt the production of serotonin, a neurotransmitter that regulates mood, and melatonin, a hormone that controls sleep patterns. This disruption can lead to the depressive symptoms associated with SAD.

The role of acupuncture in treating SAD

Recent research suggests that acupuncture can positively influence mental health by affecting the body's neurochemical and hormonal systems.

1. Regulating serotonin and melatonin

levels: Acupuncture has been shown to help regulate the production of serotonin and melatonin, thereby balancing mood and improving sleep patterns.

2. Reducing stress and anxiety: Stress and anxiety are common symptoms of SAD that can exacerbate the condition. Acupuncture has been found to activate the parasympathetic nervous system, promoting relaxation and reducing levels of stress hormones like cortisol. This helps create a sense of calm.

3. Improving energy levels: Fatigue and low energy are common symptoms of SAD. Acupuncture can help boost energy levels by improving the flow of Qi, or life energy, throughout the body. This can result in increased vitality and a greater sense of overall wellness.

4. Enhancing overall mood: Acupuncture

has been shown to release endorphins, the body's natural painkillers and mood enhancers. This can lead to an improved sense of well-being and a reduction in depressive symptoms.

When consulting with a licensed acupuncturist, they will also make recommendations that complement the acupuncture sessions including dietary suggestions, exercise, sleep assistance, supplementation, meditation, yoga, etc.

Acupuncture offers a holistic and natural approach to managing Seasonal Affective Disorder. By regulating serotonin and melatonin levels, reducing stress and anxiety, improving energy levels, and enhancing overall mood, acupuncture provides a ray of hope for those experiencing symptoms of SAD. As research continues to uncover the benefits of acupuncture, it may become an integral part of treatment plans for individuals affected by this seasonal depression. ■

Information provided by Dr. Renee Dalrymple, LAc, SEED Meditation Instructor, Soaring Crane Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, 14849 130th Ave., Indianola, 515-808-1548, call or text.

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REBUILDING trucks and friendships

Childhood friends restore a truck and reconnect.



Doug Baber and Paul Edenburn stand in front of the 1975 Chevy LUV truck loaded on the trailer in July 9, 2020. Doug gave Paul his truck, which he hadn't driven since high school.

Paul Edenburn's rebuilds have rekindled his childhood friendships. His friend Jason knew that Paul had been looking for a 1958 truck.

"I told him I wanted an old truck. He's like 'The old Apaches are cool.'"

Jason found an ad on Facebook for a 1958 Chevy Apache in August 2017. The next day, Paul, his wife, Anna, and his friend Jason went for a road trip in a truck with a trailer.

It was in the middle of Kansas.

"My wife was sending our friends pins on where we were at just in case. I'm like, 'Oh, come on. It's not that bad,'" Paul remembers.

The truck was sunken in the dirt up to the frame. They went to the neighbor's house, and he came over with a skid loader.

"It was in the middle of the field, like way in the middle of the field, so we had to pull it all the way to the road with the skid loader and then pushed it up on the trailer."

It brought back many childhood memories.

"Jason and I have been lifetime friends since we were just little kids. We used to go over to his dad's garage shop at his house, and we'd tinker and just play. It was always a passion," he said.



Paul Edenburn won Best Truck at the Ice Cream Cruise in August 2020 for his 1958 Chevy Apache. He won a trophy and \$200. Photo by Zachary Muddiman

"Jason's dad, Rory, was a hotrodder," Paul says. "Jason has always been a hotrodder since he was a baby. He's so knowledgeable about

anything to do with hotrods."

Paul worked on the truck in Jason's shop, since he had the necessary tools.



Anna, Emily and Paul cruising around Des Moines last year.

“He builds hot rods in his shop, so we put it over there, and he gave me a bay,” Paul says. “He advised and would say, ‘There you go, figure it out.’ He got me going in the right direction. I kind of built it myself with his help.

“It was funny. We judged everything on how many Sundays it was going to take because we worked on it on Sundays or Saturdays. We’d do some work, and I’m like, ‘How long do you think this is going to take?’ And he’d say, ‘That’s at least a month of Sundays.’”

Paul did a frame-off restoration.

“It was a long box truck, and we shortened the frame rails to make it a short box truck,” Paul says.

The front of the cab was cut off and replaced with a more modern 1969 Nova front stub.

Paul didn’t touch the body of the truck except where it was rusted out.

“We got a bunch of latex paints and mixed up colors and kind of patina’d it to match, but you can’t even tell. It’s got so much character. It was just fun to do with my friend,” Paul says. “We’ve taken it everywhere. We’ve been to numerous car shows in the area and all over the state. At the I-29 drag strip, they have a show called the Ice Cream Cruise, where there’s probably about 3,000 cars there. We won Best Truck.”

In the summer, Paul drives the truck as his daily car. If he doesn’t need his job trailer, he drives his Apache truck from about April until it snows.

“It gets kind of cold when it starts to get 50 degrees, because it doesn’t have a heater,” he says.

He also reconnected his friendship with Doug Baber, who gifted a 1975 Chevy LUV truck. It was Doug’s first car in high school, and when Doug graduated in 1984, he bought himself a new truck.

“He pushed that truck into the bay of his shop, and it sat there from 1984 until 2022, until he sold his shop,” Paul says, adding Doug called him and said, “I was always saving that truck for you. You need to come and get it. You can have it.”

“So, he gave it to me. It was a rust-free truck. Doug just wants to be able to drive it when it’s restored. I told him, ‘You can drive it whenever you want.’”

Paul, his wife, Anna, and his son, Zach, have run Edenburn Built for the last two years. ■

MEET Michelle Lester

Helping students develop academic, athletic and personal strength

For Michelle Lester, teaching and coaching are one and the same. Both require heart and hustle — not to mention some trial and error — and a lot of determination. As a high school special education teacher and middle school girls coach, it’s not lost on her that, for some of the girls she coaches, sports might be the reason they look forward to coming to school.

“Growing up, I was a good student and liked school, but that is not always the case for everyone,” Lester says. “I always knew I wanted to be a teacher, but sports played a big role in my life, and it’s where I found my confidence and passion for the profession.”

Lester was a four-sport letterwinner in volleyball, basketball, track and field, and softball at Adel-DeSoto. When she headed to Simpson College, it seemed natural to study PE/Health Education. She also ran track and field and still holds the school record for outdoor triple jump (36 feet and 9 inches).

After student teaching at Norwalk Middle School, her first job was at Waukee Middle School as a paraprofessional.

“My administrator there told me that my PE background and working with all students and differentiating lessons, I would make a good special education teacher,” she says. “I took that to heart and went back to get my secondary special education degree.”

Lester has been teaching special education for 33 years, with 23 in Indianola. She’s coached volleyball and track and field for most of those years, too.

She says that one aspect of education that continues to be most important between a teacher/coach and a student/athlete is respect.

“Children respect people who respect them, in ways of established guidelines, cause-effect situations, a listening ear and genuinely caring about them as people,” she explains. “Children want to be accepted for who they are and who they will be, and as teachers/coaches we give them roots and wings.”

Lester’s husband, Aaron, is also a teacher at the high school, and they both feel like part of a large family — a family that has watched them with their own children as they went through the school system.

Lester was recently recognized as the 2024 Middle School Girls Coach of the Year. As a coach, she says seeing an athlete practice a new skill and finally “get it” is similar to watching a student have the same “ah-ha” moment when they’ve mastered a concept or done well on an assessment in the classroom. She also believes it’s important that students and athletes understand that failures or setbacks are a part of the learning process.

The Lesters enjoy seeing their four adult children living successful lives and welcomed a granddaughter in July 2024. Lester enjoys spending time with family whenever possible as well as cross-stitching and reading when she gets the chance. ■



Coach of the Year Michelle Lester is grateful to her family, friends and community and says the coaches/athletes she’s worked with over the years have made her the coach she is today.

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WELLNESS

By Chelsea Taggart, L.E.

WHAT IS hyaluronic acid, and how does it help our skin?

Hyaluronic acid (HA) is a powerhouse skincare ingredient celebrated for its ability to deeply hydrate and plump the skin. Naturally found in the body, HA functions as a humectant, meaning it attracts and retains water, which is crucial for maintaining skin hydration, elasticity and overall health. As we age, the body's natural production of HA decreases, leading to drier skin, fine lines, and a loss of firmness.



One of the most significant advantages of HA is its extraordinary ability to hold up to 1,000 times its weight in water. This powerful hydration property helps to plump the skin, making fine lines and wrinkles less visible while enhancing the skin's smoothness and suppleness. Additionally, HA strengthens the skin's barrier function, improving its ability to defend against environmental stressors like pollution and UV damage that contribute to premature aging.

Beyond hydration, hyaluronic acid also has soothing properties that make it ideal for sensitive or acne-prone skin. It helps reduce redness, irritation and inflammation, promoting an even and healthy complexion.

Hyaluronic acid is commonly found in serums, moisturizers and masks. For optimal results, it should be applied to damp skin and sealed with a moisturizer to lock in hydration. Regular use enhances skin texture, moisture retention and overall radiance. ■

Information provided by Chelsea Taggart, L.E, Vivid Life Spa, 1016 Main St., Norwalk, 515-850-7848, living-vivid.com/life-spa.

FAITH

By Tom Vanderbilt

LEARNING from mistakes

There's a familiar story in the Scriptures about Peter walking on the water. He sees Jesus walking toward his boat and asks that Jesus would call him out onto the water. He steps over the gunwale and onto the water. We often marvel at Peter's boldness and faith. In fact, we often pray for a bold faith like Peter's that will enable us to "get out of the boat."



But Peter learns a more important lesson from this event. His walk is short-lived. He becomes distracted and begins to sink. His request is not for stronger faith but for a life-ring: "Lord! Save me!" And Jesus reaches out His hand and grabs Peter.

The lesson of Peter's walking on water is not asking the Lord for more faith to walk farther. The lesson to be learned from this mistake is to know that, when we begin to sink in life, Jesus will always save us. Always. ■

Article provided by Pastor Tom Vanderbilt, Mount Calvary Church, Indianola.



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Bob Fox and Sarah Fox



Esther Snyder and Tim Bryan



Morgan Robinson and Amaya Sandquist



Rachel Gocken, Lucinda Sperry and Kristy Brouillet



Chelsea Grenier and Matt Hansen



Riley Davidson, Jill Fredricks and Esther Lehman



Nick Middleton and Sophia Middleton



Teresa Strebe and Marie Brown



Cameron Burrows and Danielle Burrows



Caitlin Ross and Mark Estes

CHAMBER Dinner

The Best of Indianola Awards Annual Celebration was held Jan. 23 at Blank Performing Arts Center, Simpson College.



Jim Jacobsen and Nate Fehl



Todd Zwanziger Noah Zwanzinger and Klint Vanderpool



Michelle Lester and Aaron Lester



Riley Davidson and Dianne Coates



Ester Lehman and Ellen Glasgow



Rita Fromm and Jim Fromm



Gretchen Schrock, Andrei Murphy and Ryan Williams



Stan Thompson and Eileen Thompson



Sean Cullen and Mike Mason



Stephanie Fuller, Owen Fuller and Sophia Middleton



Monica Vail, Cory Vail, Terry McDonald and Amber McDonald

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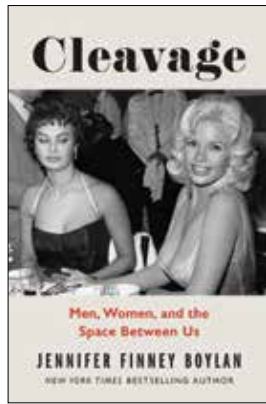
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'Cleavage: Men, Women, and the Space Between Us'

Jennifer Finney Boylan has written several phenomenal books including her profoundly influential memoir, "She's Not There," which has won numerous awards, and deservedly so. I picked up this book with a lot of expectations and anticipation. I was pleased to find this series of interconnected essays to be everything I had hoped for. This is another classic in the making.

The differences between the genders are interesting to read from the transgender perspective. Boylan came out in 2000, long before the current swirl of fear and anger was the norm, and, as such, she provides a unique lens on how society has changed over the past few decades in response. Gender infuses so much of our lives in ways small and overwhelming. It's fascinating to read about how much, and how little, it matters to one's sense of place, time and love.

Honest and raw — at times brutally so — this book wasn't always easy to read, but it is even more important for that. I like books that open my eyes to things I might not otherwise see or understand. If you're up for learning the social, mental and historical impacts of gender, this is a great place to start. ■ — *Review by Julie Goodrich*



By Jennifer Finney Boylan
02/04/25
256 pages
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'Greenteeth'

Tell me if you've heard this one before — a lake monster, a witch and a goblin walk into a bar...

This delightful mishmash of fairy tales and myths has a little bit of everything for fantasy readers, or just those who love a good story. Action, adventure, monsters and the best dog. I started this book thinking it would just be another retelling of a classic story, but I found such a skillful rendition of so many great bits of western folklore that I completely lost myself in the tale.

Jenny Greenteeth is an inquisitive and reluctant keeper of a lake whose world is turned on its side by the arrival of an accused witch. Jenny decides to help the witch in her journey, and the pair slowly build a party of unlikely heroes that quickly turns into a found family.

Whether you're already familiar with British folk tales or not, this is a joyful romp full of humor and heart. If you're looking for something warming and cozy these frigid months, this book is for you. ■

— *Review by Julie Goodrich*



By Molly O'Neill
02/25/25
320 pages
\$18.99
Orbit

THE LAMP of the body

I could barely see across the street. All the predictions of snowmageddon seemed to be coming true right before my eyes. From my office window, the blowing snow suddenly seemed to obscure anything in my vision beyond the sidewalk just a few feet outside. Wow, that happened quickly, I thought. One second there was just a dusting of snow in the air, and then it was blizzard conditions.



Except it wasn't. My eyes had deceived me.

"Your eye is the lamp of the body. When your eye is good, your whole body is also full of light. But when it is bad, your body is also full of darkness. Take care then, that the light in you is not darkness. If, therefore, your whole body is full of light, with no part of it in darkness, it will be entirely illuminated, as when a lamp shines its light on you" — Luke 11:34-36.

Yes, it was snowing outside just as it had been predicted. And though it was coming down steadily, it was still no blizzard. But these first flakes were accumulating on my already very dirty window, giving the illusion that just outside was a raging blizzard that you'd typically see at the South Pole.

In the above passage, Jesus is describing the dire straits of someone who has a skewed perspective. To not see things clearly and rightly is to affect everything about you. Your actions, your beliefs, your relationships, even your mood — you name it — everything about your life will be "off." What we look at and look to pays consequences into our lives. Listen to lies, you'll believe lies and live according to lies. Seek out questionable sources, and you'll consume questionable facts.

Yet we're not just amoebas. Jesus points us to the fact that we can choose what our eye is focused upon. "Take care then," He says, "that the light in you is not darkness." We need to consciously choose to avail ourselves only of what is true. The implications from the One who claimed to actually be "the Truth" are obvious. We need to hear from Him.

Spread throughout our community are churches consistently looking to what Christ, as recorded in Scripture, has said. They focus their eyes on Him so that the light in them is not darkness. This coming Sunday, seek out one of these churches and avail yourself of the same light. ■

Information provided by Kevin Mayer, New Heights Church, 200 E. First Ave., Indianola, 515-442-5111.

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