

WEST DES MOINES  
JORDAN CREEK

FEBRUARY 2025

# To Living Magazine

MAGAZINE



# RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS



Dallas County residents share their favorites

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# WELCOME

## A COMMERCE-CREATING machine

Residents' Choice. Those two simple words have a lot of meaning to those who are recognized and those who seek out the people, businesses, places and events that are honored.

Yes, we have once again compiled the results of our local Residents' Choice poll, the only one of its kind. It is truly unique in two significant ways.

First, our poll is mailed to every residential household in the pages of this magazine with a link to an open website. That makes the poll available to every single resident. No exclusions.

Second, our poll has open-ended questions, which means we don't load the ballots with pre-determined answers to try to sway it in a certain way. The results are what they are. You will likely agree with some of them, and you will disagree with others — kind of like political elections. But, in this poll, all who are recognized are winners, and the end result is a great positive for all involved.

Readers of this publication have proven to seek out the winners and spend their time, energy and money with them. The poll results have become a customized search engine of sorts, providing valuable information on the choices of local residents in a variety of categories that are important to them.

Those who have been chosen tell me how much of an impact this directly has on them, their businesses and their organizations. Being recognized for positive contributions is seemingly always great, but when it helps create commerce, it is even better — and this Residents' Choice poll is a commerce-creating machine.

I explain this next point each year, but it is worth noting again. Those recognized in this poll are the choices of our readers — local residents. Although we agree with many of you on your choices, we do not pick them, and we have no impact on the results. I wouldn't have it any other way.

Other organizations are continuing to try to implement polls like ours, but none have the reach and credibility that ours has. You can't blame others for trying to imitate what we do, but you can question how they implement their polls and how many people actually vote in them.

Meanwhile, I thank all of you who took the time to vote in this year's Residents' Choice poll. Your votes do make an incredible difference. And, if you didn't vote, well, there is always next year.

Thanks for reading. ■



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# RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Dallas County residents share their favorites

By Jackie Wilson

Residents of Dallas County have again weighed in on their favorite businesses, people, events and places in the latest Residents' Choice poll. The poll results share residents' top three choices in dozens of categories, many of which are extremely competitive with a handful of votes separating the winner from the runners up. Consequently, we view them all as winners. They have captured the favor of people who live in Dallas County and who know the businesses, people, events and places of the area best.

Some winners are now going on three or more years at the top of their categories. Their supporters have proven to be a loyal bunch. Others are new to the awards list, showing they have made a good impression over the last year and are building up a strong following as well.

West Des Moines residents won't have far to

go to enjoy many of the winners and runners up. Stop in at Fiesta Mexican Restaurant, Early Bird Brunch, 7 Stone Pizzeria and Casey's for some of residents' choices for favorite eats. Take in a sermon by Pastor Mike Housholder at Lutheran Church of Hope, residents' choices for favorite pastor and church. Aches and pains, check out residents' choices for physical therapy, Core Physical Therapy and Athletico Physical Therapy. These are only a few of the West Des Moines top three. Read on for the others.

If you aren't familiar with some of the winners, give those businesses, events and places a visit and find out why they are residents' favorites. And if you didn't vote this year, be sure to do so next time. It may be your vote that makes a difference and lifts one of your favorites into the top tier of the Residents' Choice poll.

Blake Hardy is a practicing partner at Core Physical Therapy, which was residents' choice for favorite physical therapy practice.



# Dallas County Residents' Choice for Favorite...

*(Runners up in alphabetical order; \*indicates repeat winner.)*

**Restaurant**

**Fiesta Mexican Restaurant**

**Runners up:** Ambro's Roadhouse; Patrick's Restaurant

**Restaurant for breakfast**

**\* Patrick's Restaurant**

**Runners up:** Early Bird Brunch; Waveland Cafe West

**Restaurant for lunch**

**Fiesta Mexican Restaurant**

**Runners up:** Ambro's Roadhouse; Patrick's Restaurant

**Restaurant for dinner**

**Fiesta Mexican Restaurant**

**Runners up:** Ambro's Roadhouse; Mickey's Irish Pub

**Restaurant for dessert**

**\* Billy's Ice Cream Store**

**Runners up:** Home Sweet Cone Ice Cream; Patrick's Restaurant

**Place for ice cream**

**Billy's Ice Cream Store**

**Runners up:** Home Sweet Cone Ice Cream; Waukee Ice Cream Shoppe

**Pizza establishment**

**\* Casey's**

**Runners up:** 7 Stone Pizzeria; Patrick's Restaurant

**Bar**

**The Kee**

**Runners up:** Ambro's Roadhouse; Mickey's Irish Pub

**Coffee shop**

**\* The Morning Grind**

**Runners up:** The Coffeesmith; Scooter's Coffee

**Catering company**

**\* Hy-Vee Catering**

**Runners up:** Kue'd Smokehouse; Snappy's Stick Fire Barbecue



Mike Household, pastor at Lutheran Church of Hope, was residents' choice for favorite pastor.

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# FEATURE

## Server/bartender

### Samantha Tonelli, The Kee

Runners up: Brent Kolk, Corner Tap; Miranda Broeker, Ambro's Roadhouse

## Auto service

### \* Alley Auto Sales

Runners up: Adel Tire & Service; Lund Motors

## Auto body shop

### Modern Motors

Runners up: Graham Collision; Olson's Body & Paint

## Car dealership

### \* Shottenkirk Chevrolet

Runners up: Stivers Ford Lincoln; Willis Automotive

## Preschool/daycare

### Raccoon River Preschool

Runners up: Faith's Flock Preschool; University Kids

## Nonprofit

### \* Waukee Area Christian Services

Runners up: Adel Good Samaritan Food Pantry; AHeinz57 Pet Rescue & Transport

## School

### \* Meadow View Elementary

Runners up: Adel Elementary; ADM High School

## Park

### \* Triumph Park

Runners up: Centennial Park; Evans Park

## Community festival

### \* Adel Sweet Corn Festival

Runners up: Dallas County Fair; Waukee Arts Festival

## Church

### \* Lutheran Church of Hope

Runners up: New Hope Church; St. John's Catholic Church

## Pastor

### \* Mike Housholder

Runners up: Matt Krause; Ryan Whitson

## Chamber of commerce

### \* Waukee Area Chamber of Commerce

Runners up: Adel Partners Chamber of Commerce; Perry Chamber of Commerce

## Library

### \* Adel Public Library

Runners up: Van Meter Public Library; Waukee Public Library

## Camping spot

### Des Moines KOA West Holiday

Runners up: Dallas County Fair Campgrounds; Timberline Campground

## Grocery store

### \* Fareway Meat & Grocery

Runners up: Aldi; Hy-Vee

## Boutique

### \* Azalea Lane Boutique

Runners up: Mainstream Boutique; Real Deals

## Retail store

### Azalea Lane Boutique

Runners up: Real Deals; The Tiger Shop by Iconic

## Thrift Store

### \* Goodwill of Central Iowa

Runners up: Many Hands Thrift Market; The Salvation Army Thrift Store

*Thank you for voting us Favorite  
Dallas County Law Firm*



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# FEATURE

**Home improvement retail store**  
**Waukee Hardware & Rent-It Center**  
**Runners up:** Baldon Hardware; Lowe's

**Liquor store**  
**World Liquor & Tobacco + Vapors**  
**Runners up:** Hy-Vee Wine & Spirits; University Liquors

**Nursery or garden center**  
**\* Harvey's Greenhouse**  
**Runners up:** Bentley Ridge Tree Farm & Nursery; Earl May Garden Center

**Place to purchase a gift for a man**  
**Old Station Craft Meats**  
**Runners up:** Baldon Hardware; The Tiger Shop by Iconic

**Place to purchase a gift for a woman**  
**Azalea Lane Boutique**  
**Runners up:** Real Deals; Adel Flowers & Gifts

**Bakery**  
**River to River Bakery & Pizza**  
**Runners up:** 5 Borough Bakery; Black Water Bakery

**Florist**  
**\* Adel Flowers & Gifts**  
**Runners up:** Hazel Mae Floral Events; Hy-Vee

**Dad/child date spot**  
**\* Adel Family Fun Center**  
**Runners up:** The Palms Theatre & IMAX; Warrior Lanes

**Mom/child date spot**  
**\* Adel Family Fun Center**  
**Runners up:** The Morning Grind; The Palms Theatre & IMAX

**Place to take your mom and dad**  
**Fiesta Mexican Restaurant**  
**Runners up:** The Brenton Arboretum; Early Bird Brunch

**Place to take your kids or grandkids**  
**Triumph Park**  
**Runners up:** Adel Family Fun Center; The Palms Theatre & IMAX

**Children's birthday party spot**  
**\* Adel Family Fun Center**  
**Runners up:** Tigers' Den; Warrior Lanes

**Golf course**  
**\* Sugar Creek Golf Course**  
**Runners up:** Hillcrest Country Club; River Valley Golf Course

**Hair salon**  
**\* Texture Salon**  
**Runners up:** Hairs2You; Studio 10

**Physician's clinic**  
**\* The Iowa Clinic**  
**Runners up:** MercyOne; UnityPoint Health

**Dental office**  
**\* Adel Family Dentistry**  
**Runners up:** Adel Dental Group; Lush Family Dental

**Orthodontics office**  
**\* Johnson Orthodontics**  
**Runners up:** Bernhardt and Smith Orthodontics; Central Iowa Orthodontics

**Mental health services**  
**Lifetime Therapy Services PLLC**  
**Runners up:** Lambertsen Therapeutic Services; Optimae LifeServices

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# FEATURE

## Chiropractic office

### Luellen Chiropractic

**Runners up:** Key Potential Chiropractic; Waukee Wellness & Chiropractic

## Vision care

### \* Elite Eye Care

**Runners up:** Adel Vision Clinic; Wolfe Eye Clinic

## Health club or gym

### \* Waukee Family YMCA

**Runners up:** Fit & Fierce 515; SOULSHINE yoga + fitness

## Pharmacy

### Sumpter Pharmacy

**Runners up:** Adel HealthMart; Medicap

## Cosmetic services

### The Kissed Peach Integrative Aesthetics & Wellness

**Runners up:** Chelsis Skin Therapy; Reese Hood Lash and Brow

## Physical therapy

### \* Core Physical Therapy

**Runners up:** Athletico Physical Therapy; Maximum Physical Therapy

## Dance studio

### Let's Dance

**Runners up:** Adel Tumbling & Dance Club; Premiere Dance Project

## Gymnastics and/or tumbling studio

### Adel Tumbling & Dance Club

**Runners up:** Jacobs Gymnastics; Sapphire Gymnastics Academy

## Audiologist/hearing clinic

### The Iowa Clinic

**Runners up:** MercyOne Clive ENT Care Clinic; Wolfe Audiology

## CBD Store

### \* CBD American Shaman

**Runners up:** CIV Plus; Sumpter Pharmacy

## Financial planner

### \* Travis Gaule, Edward Jones

**Runners up:** Bob Grove, Edward Jones; Brad Heyer, Edward Jones

## Law firm

### Bergkamp, Hemphill & McClure, P.C.

**Runners up:** Brown, Fagen & Rouse; Hopkins & Huebner, P.C.



Fiesta Mexican Restaurant, with a location in West Des Moines, was residents' choice in multiple categories, including favorite restaurant, restaurant for lunch and restaurant for dinner.

## Accounting firm

### \* Banwart Tax & Accounting

**Runners up:** Meriwether, Wilson & Company, PLLC; Peter M. Comito, CPA

## Veterinarian

### \* Adel Veterinary Clinic

**Runners up:** Broderick Animal Clinic; The Animal Hospital of Adel

## Dog groomer

### \* Handsome Hounds Boarding and Grooming

**Runners up:** Perry Paw Spa; Stylin' Paws

## Pet care

### \* Handsome Hounds Boarding and Grooming

**Runners up:** Adel Veterinary Clinic; Dogtopia

## Lawn care business

### Grassy Knoll Lawn Care, LLC

**Runners up:** Innovative Lawn Solutions, LLC; Luke's Lawn & Landscaping

## Landscaping company

### \* Executive Outdoor Solutions

**Runners up:** Ripke Outdoor; RJ Lawn & Landscape

## Heating and cooling business

### \* Adel & Winterset TV & Appliance

**Runners up:** Baldon Plumbing, Heating & Cooling; Tigges Comfort Services

## Electrical business

### \* Elite Electric & Utility Contractors

**Runners up:** Slycord Electric Co.; Webster Electric Inc.

## Plumbing company

### Home Run Plumbing

**Runners up:** Baldon Plumbing, Heating & Cooling; Lenhart Plumbing

## Senior living establishment

### Edgewater Senior Living Community

**Runners up:** Attivo Trail - Waukee; Village Cooperative of West Des Moines

## Insurance Agency

### \* Eric Schepers Insurance

**Runners up:** Luellen Richardson Insurance Inc.; Valor Insurance Services

## Realtor

### \* Julianna Cullen, RE/MAX Precision

**Runners up:** Donna Stall, RE/MAX Concepts; Kevin Howe, RE/MAX Precision

## Bank/credit union

### Lincoln Savings Bank

**Runners up:** Raccoon Valley Bank; Veridian Credit Union

## Photographer

### \* DKay Photography - Danielle Hawkins

**Runners up:** Kelsey Arganbright Photography; LE Photo Design - Lori Mortensen

## Place for guests to stay

### \* Big Blue Bed & Breakfast

**Runners up:** Aloft Waukee; Hotel Pattee

## Home builder/remodeling contractor

### RCI Builders

**Runners up:** Cody Bailey Construction & Remodel; NexGen Baths

## Outdoor lawn equipment store

### \* Waukee Power Equipment

**Runners up:** Baldon Hardware; Waukee Hardware & Rent-It Center

## Pest Control

### \* Paul's AAA Pest Control

**Runner up:** Central Iowa Pest Control; Fenix Pest Control, Inc. ■





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## WDM HISTORICAL Society year in review



More than 4,300 adults and youth visited the Jordan House and Bennett School or participated in an educational program, summer camp or lecture — a new record.

- The Iowa Files, a free public lecture series presented in partnership with the West Des Moines Library, launched its sixth year of free programming that celebrates the people, places and events that make Iowa interesting.

- The Jordan Scholars Leadership Institute celebrates its ninth class, giving high school juniors unique access to community leaders who excel in the areas in which James Jordan also excelled. Scholars are provided a stipend so finances are never a barrier to participation.

- The Polk County Master Gardeners selected the Jordan House as their newest volunteer opportunity, generously giving their time and talent (and plants) to beautify the museum with historically accurate plantings and a new moon garden. Ted Lare Design & Build donated significant hardscapes and plants to the beautifying effort.

- Volunteers helped with cleanup at the Jordan House and Bennett School, and a new well pump and cover were installed as an Eagle Scout project.

- Schoolhouse Storytime at the Bennett School gave young families the chance to hear fun stories, dance, sing and make a craft all summer.

- Neumann Monson Architects donated

hundreds of hours helping design a site plan for the Historic Campus of Legacy Woods.

- The Jordan House Museum hosted free tours in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and, thanks to Polk County, distributed books about Dr. King to visitors.

- We explored a classic Victorian craft in a workshop led by artists from Olson-Larsen Galleries.

- The third Historic Cemetery Tour told the stories of early Valley Junction residents and showed what the City of West Des Moines has planned for the Huston Cemetery.

### What's new for 2025

- The Historical Society is working with the City of West Des Moines and donors to develop an exciting Historic Campus for the Legacy Woods project. The campus will bring together the history of the original Jordan farm, the fight for freedom represented by the Underground Railroad, Indigenous peoples, the railroads, and the contributions of the early workers to today's community. This area will inspire, educate and connect our community with the beauty of Iowa's natural landscapes. History is showcased in Legacy Woods through the rich natural scape as well as through the Historic Jordan House Museum.

The planned first addition to the historic campus will be a 19th century log cabin,

professionally restored and available to visitors to the Jordan House and Legacy Woods. If you'd like to support this project and help Raise the Walls, visit [www.wdmhs.org/historic-log-cabin](http://www.wdmhs.org/historic-log-cabin).

- Thanks to funding from the Iowa Arts Council, a 3-D scan of all three floors of the Jordan House Museum has been created and will be made available online in early 2025. This virtual tour doesn't require an app and will make the Underground Railroad exhibit and the second floor of the Jordan House virtually accessible.

- New workshops will include classic crafts, such as Victorian Hair Art and other forgotten hobbies.

- A new exhibit focusing on Victorian Leisure and the Impact of the Industrial Revolution will open February 2025.

### Your support makes all this possible

Members and donors are a critical part of the ability to provide education to all, including thousands of schoolchildren. Everyone deserves access to history, but it is especially important for our state's young people. History and civics education can help the next generation thrive as engaged members of their communities and inspire them to build a better future.

Your donation, of any amount, will enable the West Des Moines Historical Society to continue to preserve, protect and educate. ■



# FEEL the love at the WDM Public Library



Back by popular demand, we have a Blind Date with a Book display up on the second floor near the new books — but with a twist. The theme this year is “forbidden love” and features both romance books and banned books. Read the short description on the outside of a wrapped book, take a chance on love, and check it out, then let us know how your “date” went by tagging us in your review on social media. We’ll be keeping an eye on Facebook and Instagram and sharing date reviews as the month goes on.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Reminder:** the library will be closed on Monday, Feb. 17 for staff training.

**Unfinished Objects (UFO) Craft & Chat  
Saturday, Feb. 22, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. (adults)**

Do you have a craft project that you don’t have time to finish at home. Come join us at the library for fun and fellowship. You may come and go as your schedule allows. No registration required.

**Sensory Spaces: ARL TheraPets  
Sunday, Feb. 23, 2-3 p.m. (all ages)**

The Animal Rescue League will be bringing TheraPets to the library for our Sensory Spaces event. In order to keep the event sensory-friendly, you will sign up for time slots with the animals on the day.

**Author Event: Rachelle Chase  
Tuesday, Feb. 25, 6:45-8 p.m. (adults)**

The WDM Library Friends Foundation is proud to present local author Rachelle Chase, author of “Creating the Black Utopia of Buxton, Iowa” and “Lost Buxton,” along with six fiction book and novellas. No registration required.

**Author Event: Allen Eskens  
Thursday, Feb. 27, 6:30-8 p.m. (adults)**

The library is excited to host award-winning author Allen Eskens for an author discussion. Eskens is the author of popular thrillers including his latest release, “The Quiet Librarian.” Beaverdale Books will be onsite selling copies of his books. No registration required. ■



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## Upcoming in the April issue of West Des Moines / Jordan Creek 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](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com) to be included in the April issue.



## DIY in the Junction

Feb. 22  
Valley Junction

Enjoy classes, make and takes and crafts at this Discover-It-Yourself event. See what you can create. Classes run all day. See the list of classes and registration links if applicable at <https://valleyjunction.com/valley-junction-events/diy-in-the-junction/>.

## Parks and Recreation Programs

For information about upcoming programs and registration links, visit [www.wdm.iowa.gov/government/parks-recreation/program-registration](http://www.wdm.iowa.gov/government/parks-recreation/program-registration).

• **Junior Chemists: Colorful Chemistry, ages 4-8, Tuesday and Thursday, Feb. 25 and Feb. 27, 6-7 p.m., \$55, VJ Activity Center.** Students will explore the world of chemistry through vibrant and engaging experiments, mixing colors, and exploring reactions. They'll learn basic chemical concepts while having fun creating colorful fizzing reactions and magical mixtures. Safety equipment will be provided for students.

• **Ocean Explorers, ages 4-8, Tuesday and Thursday, March 11 and March 13, 6-7 p.m., \$55, VJ Activity Center.** Escape the cold and embark on an immersive ocean-themed STEAM class. Your student will dive into the wonders of the sea through interactive

activities and hands-on experiments. They'll learn about marine life and explore the different layers of the ocean after learning about buoyancy from a local diver. Finally, students will use their creativity to create their own sand art piece to take home.

• **Leprechaun Trap Quest, ages 4-12 with adult, Saturday, March 15, 10-11 a.m., \$40, VJ Activity Center.** Join our enchanting workshop where adults and children team up to design and engineer a leprechaun trap. While exploring trap design, you will learn about the engineering design process, blending science, engineering, creativity, and a bit of Irish charm, to create the perfect trap for catching a leprechaun. Registration fee includes one child and one adult.

• **Lee Cole's Magicamp, ages 7-15, Monday and Wednesday, March 17 and March 19, 1:15-4 p.m., \$49, Nature Lodge.**

Magicamp is for anyone who likes to have fun. You'll learn how to entertain and amaze your friends, family and classmates with magic that you can do anywhere, at any time, and for the rest of your life. Join professional magician Lee Cole for two days of fun at the Raccoon River Park Nature Lodge. All magic materials are provided.

• **Decorating Eggs with Naturally Made Dyes, ages 8 and older with adult, Sunday March 30, 3-4 p.m., Nature Lodge, \$7.** Discover the art of naturally dyeing eggs using everyday food scraps and spices in this interactive workshop. Learn how to create your own vibrant dyes at home and transform plain eggs into unique masterpieces. We'll also delve into innovative techniques like leaf print bundling for an added touch of creativity. Please bring a carton of eggs (either hardboiled or raw) to decorate during the session.

## Axe-throwing events

Ironside Axe Club, 2700 University Ave., Suite 100, West Des Moines

• **Feb 21: Dark Roast Happy Hour Business Networking event, 5-7 p.m.** Enjoy axe throwing, networking and beer. Free event, but donations are encouraged to help fund the events.

• **March 22: Pirate Take Over and Sea Shanty Sing Along featuring the Orkes and Trolls.** \$1 off drinks for all pirates. \$10 axe throwing from 6-10 p.m. Sing-a-long from 7-9 p.m.

## CAP Theatre presents "Disney's Beauty and the Beast JR"

Feb. 14-March 2  
CAP Theatre, 201 First Ave. S., Altoona

Featuring 28 youth actors on the Melissa Grooters Stage, CAP Theatre presents "Disney's Beauty and the Beast JR." Friday shows begin at 7 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday matinees begin at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$16 for adults, \$14 for seniors and \$10 for students. Class Act Productions (CAP) Theatre is a children's community theatre in Altoona that strives to give young people, regardless of experience, the opportunity to be part of and appreciate live theatre.

## "Ripcord"

Through Feb. 16  
Tallgrass Theatre Company,  
2019 Grand Ave., Suite 100,  
West Des Moines  
[tallgrasstheatre.org](http://tallgrasstheatre.org)

A sunny room on an upper floor is prime real estate in the Bristol Place Senior Living Facility, so when the



cantankerous Abby is forced to share her quarters with new-arrival Marilyn, she has no choice but to get rid of the infuriatingly chipper woman by any means necessary. A seemingly harmless bet between the old women quickly escalates into a dangerous game of one-upmanship that reveals not just the tenacity of these worthy opponents, but also deeper truths that each would rather remain hidden. For information and tickets, visit <https://tallgrasstheatre.org/tickets/>.



# EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Check for cancellations

## “Men on Boats”

Feb. 7 - March 2

Des Moines Playhouse, 831 42nd St., Des Moines

Tickets for “Men on Boats” may be purchased online at [dmplayhouse.com](http://dmplayhouse.com), by phone at 515-277-6261, and at The Playhouse ticket office. The year: 1869. The crew: a maniacally talkative youth, an old Civil War vet who doesn't like people, an overexcited Brit, and a hunter who wears only beaver skins, to name just a few. Led by John Wesley Powell, a one-armed crazy-faced explorer with an excitable soul, this motley bunch faces treacherous Colorado River rapids and the unexplored American frontier. Governed by ambition, hunger, and downright insanity, they must decide when to press on and when to give in to the dangers of exploration. Note: This play contains adult language. Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays and 2 p.m. Sundays. A pre-show talk is 30 minutes prior to curtain. Tickets start at \$29.

The IRIS Sensation Team will provide audio description for the Feb. 16, performance. ASL translations can be provided with advance notice. These services are free and reasonable accommodations will be made. Requests should be made through The Playhouse ticket office. Closed captioning is available using the GalaPro app.

## Covered Bridges Winery events

2207 1700th Trail, Winterset

[coveredbridgeswinery.com](http://coveredbridgeswinery.com)

See website for tickets and any last minute changes.

- Feb. 15: Valentine's Dinner, Matt Terronez Quartet. Tickets required
- Feb. 16: Sunday Music at the Winery, 2-4 p.m., no cover charge, Brian Congdon
- Feb. 22: Blues & BBQ, Central Iowa Blues Society Benefit Dinner
- Feb. 28: Bourbon Barrel Release Party
- March 1: Music at the Winery, Looking 4 Luke, 6:30-9:30 p.m., \$5 cover
- March 9: Sunday Music at the Winery, 2-4 p.m., no cover charge, Jesse and the Medicine Men
- March 23: Sunday Music at the Winery, 2-4 p.m., no cover charge, Jake Schrodt
- March 29: Comedy Night Chowdown Improv
- April 13: Sunday Music at the Winery, 2-4 p.m., no cover charge, Liv McNair
- April 19: Music at the Winery, Kracklin, 6:30-9:30 p.m., \$5 cover



## Des Moines Home and Garden Show

Through Feb. 16

Iowa Events Center, 730 Third St., Des Moines

[desmoineshomeandgardenshow.com](http://desmoineshomeandgardenshow.com)

All things gardening will be on display at this event. The list of exhibitors is lengthy, from food and beverage to garden and landscaping. Don't miss the Inspiration Stage, Feature Gardens and appearances by the stars of HGTV's “Down Home Fab.” ■

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# RECIPE

## 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](http://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.



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## PLAN AHEAD

By Kathy Dunbar

### PLANNING a trip?

Do you travel out of state or out of the country, whether to visit family, to go on a vacation or to escape the Iowa winters?

Being a funeral home, we know there are times when a death occurs away from home. It happens more often than people would probably expect.

What people do not always realize is that it can be difficult to get a person transported back home — and there can be unexpected expenses.

While the funeral home does everything it can to make these situations as seamless as possible and to keep extra expenses at a minimum, there can still be some challenges.

Fortunately, there is an affordable solution that can provide a tremendous amount of peace of mind to those who frequently travel.

Travel plans offered through a funeral home can be very affordable (usually a modest one-time payment), and they can help ensure that, if the inevitable happens away from home, everything will be covered to bring the loved one back home to where services will be provided.

If you are a traveler — or plan to become one in your retirement years — then visit with your funeral provider of choice and ask if they offer a travel plan.

As we often like to say, you will be glad you did. ■



Information provided by Kathy Dunbar, Advanced Planning Counselor, Hamilton's on Westown Parkway, 3601 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-697-3681



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## HEALTH

By Ashley Powell

### IMPROVING heart health naturally

Heart health is a priority for everyone, and natural remedies like CBD and alkaloids offer a supportive path to cardiovascular wellness. According to a 2020 study, CBD can reduce high blood pressure by lowering stress and inflammation — two major contributors to heart disease. Pairing CBD with omega-3 fatty acids is another great way to support heart health. Studies have found that both CBD and omega-3s promote healthy circulation, reduce inflammation and improve cholesterol levels, making them an excellent combination for overall cardiovascular wellbeing. Look for a product that includes both CBD and Omega-3 for those looking to get the best of both worlds.

Alkaloids, naturally occurring compounds found in plants like kratom, have been shown to enhance energy and improve focus while helping to alleviate pain and stabilize mood. These natural ingredients help the body function at its best without the jitteriness of artificial stimulants.

Visit your locally owned CBD store to explore heart-supporting products and learn from certified hemp consultants how natural remedies can fit into your routine. ■



Information provided by Ashley Powell, CBD American Shaman, 800 S. 50th St., No. 106, West Des Moines, 515-380-5251, and 3418 Eighth St. S.W., No. 3, Altoona, 515-967-4036. References: Sultan, Salahaden R et al. "The effects of acute and sustained cannabidiol dosing for seven days on the haemodynamics in healthy men: A randomised controlled trial." *British journal of clinical pharmacology* vol. 86,6 (2020): 1125-1138. doi:10.1111/bcp.14225. Prevette, E., Kuypers, K.P.C., Theunissen, E.L. et al. Clinical Implications of Kratom (*Mitragyna speciosa*) Use: a Literature Review. *Curr Addict Rep* 10, 317-334 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40429-023-00478-3>



# JOINER shares stories of hardware store cats

Author writes book to read to pets — and kids.

Lauren Joiner of West Des Moines has published a children’s book called “Silly Pet Tales.” The book of limericks features a page and limerick about “Andie,” a hardware store cat in Waukee. Another is about Wesley, the hardware cat the author grew up with.

“I wrote the book with reading to pets in mind, so there are keywords to engage a four legged audience as well,” Joiner says.

Joiner started Lora Art Corner in 2020 as a way to share her passion for art and creativity. Her husband suggested she publish a kids book in 2020, but “procrastination is my middle name,” she says.

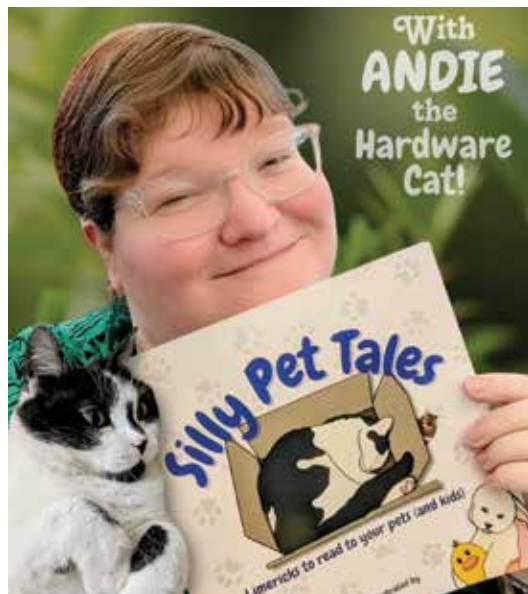
Joiner finally gained the courage to self-publish in 2024 after getting motivation from IABE where she was selling her artwork. Silly Animal Tales includes 2020 illustrations that were hand drawn then digitized, as she didn’t know how to digitally draw back then. She decided to keep the original illustrations and combine them with

the new characters to “show that anyone can improve with practice as long as you don’t give up.”

“Silly Animal Tales 2” came out shortly after that burst of inspiration, and now she collects unique names to add to future books in the series.

Joiner’s third book, “Silly Pet Tales,” was designed to be read to pets (and kids). Growing up, she would read to her cat, Sunny, and says they both loved those quiet moments of comfort.

“I never really found a book written to engage our little furry friends and thought it might be a cute idea for kids to read to their pets and practice their reading,” Joiner says. “Most of the keywords are words that dogs understand and might even react to. Cats... well, every cat ‘owner’ knows the words cats respond to aren’t always kid friendly, but they’ll still enjoy snuggling on your lap while you read to them.” ■



Lauren Joiner has published a book called “Silly Pet Tales” to read to pets — and children.

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# THE FINAL Disposition Act

Iowans now have a simple way to direct their funeral arrangements and disposition of their remains after death. The Iowa Legislature passed Iowa Code §144C, entitled the Final Disposition Act. It allows an individual to name a designee who shall have the exclusive right to make decisions regarding the final disposition of the decedent's remains and the ceremonies performed. This law went into effect in 2008.



The designation must be in writing and contained either in a health care power of attorney or in an instrument attached to the health care power of attorney. The way the law is currently written, it appears that a person must have a health care power of attorney in order to appoint a designee under the Final Disposition Act.

A durable health care power of attorney is a document through which you name another person to make health care decisions for you if you are unable to make them. The person, known as your "attorney-in-fact," is required to make decisions according to directions you provide. If your wishes are not known, your agent will make decisions in your best interest based on the discussions you have had with your agent. The document is "durable" because it remains effective even if you become incapacitated or incompetent.

Placing a final disposition designation within a durable health care power of attorney gives you maximum control over your final arrangements. The designation can contain one or more alternate designees and may include contact information for the designee and alternates. However, the declaration shall not include directives for final disposition and shall not include arrangements for ceremonies.

Therefore, if you appoint a designee, it is critical that you speak with that person about your final arrangements.

A designee or third party (such as a funeral director) who relies in good faith on the declaration is insulated from civil and criminal liability. If there is a question about the type of ceremony or the disposition of remains, the funeral director will defer first to the person you appointed. Your agent must act quickly, however. The designee has either 24 hours after notification or 48 hours after death, whichever is earlier, to exercise the authority.

A final disposition act designation allows you to nominate someone you trust, will ensure that your wishes are carried out, and can prevent disagreement among your loved ones during a difficult time. ■

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

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# COMPASSIONATE service

King finds purpose in giving back.

In April 2020, Kevin King retired after 32 years as a critical care registered nurse and adult liver transplant coordinator at UCLA Medical Center in Los Angeles. Seeking a fresh start, he relocated to West Des Moines, a city he'd visited a few times prior and quickly grown to love.



While his career was behind him, King knew he wasn't ready to stop helping others. Today, he devotes his time and energy to making a difference in his new community as a volunteer with the West Des Moines Department of Health and Social Services' food pantry.

"I decided it was time to repurpose myself," King says. "I was very fortunate to have great parents and grandparents that always instilled the importance of giving back to the community and taking care of one another. Therefore, helping others was a perfect fit for me personally."

Since March 2023, King has volunteered weekly at the food pantry, assisting families and individuals with accessing food and personal supplies. Whether it's restocking shelves, processing donations, or distributing school supplies and winter clothing, King's dedication is driven by a desire to give back to a community that has welcomed him.

"I felt that the food pantry would be a good fit for me," he says. "As a teenager, I worked in a grocery store during my high school years, and I enjoy interacting with people. I also felt that, with the growing numbers of families facing food insecurities, it would be a great place for me to volunteer my time."

For King, volunteering is about more than simply lending a hand — it's about building connections. He's especially fond of engaging with clients, whether it's catching up with regular visitors or meeting new ones. One moment that stands out involves an 8-year-old boy who came to the pantry with his father. Fluent in both English and Spanish, the boy became King's translator for the visit.

"In talking to him, I found out that he loved math," King explains. "So, I immediately gave him the hand-held counter, and he assisted in tallying up all the items. We worked side by side counting and bagging the items. He absolutely loved it."

Likewise, King enjoyed seeing the boy so engaged and helping.

"He was truly an amazing little boy," King says. "His father must be so proud."

Another unforgettable experience came when a client collapsed due to a medical emergency. King and two fellow volunteers immediately came to the person's aid. Drawing on his nursing background, King focused on stabilizing the client while his colleagues coordinated with EMS and reassured others at the pantry.

"I was very grateful that I was able to use my skills as a nurse," King says. "However, I was even more grateful that my two colleagues helped take control of the situation without missing a beat."

For King, the rewards of volunteering are immense. He's embraced the opportunity to connect with people from diverse backgrounds, brushing up on his language skills and even using tools like Google Translate to better



Ryan Mehalovich of Edward Jones presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Kevin King.

serve clients. Above all, he enjoys the sense of fulfillment he feels after each shift.

"Volunteering makes you truly humble and really does make you smile at the end of your shift," he says. "I highly encourage anyone who is thinking about volunteering to at least try it. I guarantee you will not be sorry and may find yourself wanting to do more." ■

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



## 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



Source: National Cancer Institute [cancer.gov](http://cancer.gov)



# MEET Sarah Moses

Kindergarten teacher inspired by aunt's stories.

Sarah Moses is in her 20th year of teaching and currently teaches kindergarten at Waukee's Brookview Elementary in West Des Moines. Moses answers a few questions about her teaching career.



Sarah Moses was inspired to become a teacher by her aunt, who told her stories about her experiences.

**Why did you want to be a teacher?** "My aunt, Mrs. Silver, was an elementary teacher in Madrid. When we spent time together, she always told me stories about her students. I can still remember the names of some of her students nearly 30 years later. Her days never sounded boring — they were always filled with some kind of adventure."

**What experience led you to teaching special education for 17 years?** "As a teenager, I worked at a church camp in Mason City. One week was dedicated to children of differing abilities. The campers were positive, energetic and full of love. That experience ignited my interest in majoring in elementary education with an endorsement in special education."

**Why did you choose to teach kindergarten?** "One of the most rewarding aspects of my classroom is the sense of discovery, possibilities and wonder that fills every day. I love creating a space where even the simplest moments can be transformed into exciting adventures in learning."

**How has teaching changed over the years?** "The integration of technology into the classroom has revolutionized learning, giving students access to a wealth of resources and opportunities to explore concepts in ways that weren't possible before. It's incredible to see how technology has transformed education, empowering students to become curious and independent learners."

**What would you like people to know about the teaching profession?** "One misconception is the idea that a teacher's work ends when the school day is over. Teachers work tirelessly from the moment they wake up to the moment they go to bed. Teaching is a profession rooted in dedication, reflection and an unwavering commitment to student success."

"I've always believed that there should be something like 'teacher duty,' similar to 'jury duty,' where members of the public could step into a teacher's shoes for a day. It's hard to truly understand the depth and complexity of what goes into a teacher's day until you've experienced it."

**Why do you like being a teacher?** "I've witnessed the incredible growth of my students, both academically and socially. It's fulfilling to see them develop confidence, leadership skills and friendships, setting the foundation for their futures."

"It's a role filled with laughter, unconditional love and incredible growth — not just for the students, but for me as well. Every day is a different adventure. I'm not sure there is any other profession where you go to work every single day and get greeted with handmade cards, hugs, smiles and "I love yous.' It really doesn't get any better." ■

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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  
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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*



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## REPAIR and reuse

### Rotary repairs, gives away bikes

A West Des Moines Rotary Club program is giving new life to donated bikes through a community service project.

Carol Narak, with the WDM Rotary Club, says the service project was started by Rotary member Harold Hulleman.

The program received a grant to buy a pickup truck to collect and deliver bikes. The grant also included bike stands and tools to work on the bikes.

A warehouse space donated by Rotarian Bob Start stores the bikes and equipment. Volunteers work on bikes donated by the public.

A recent plea for donated bikes netted 27 bikes.

"I've had bikes show up at my house, and I didn't know they were coming," Narak says.

Often, volunteers will pick up bikes as needed.

"People cleaning out garages or those whose kids have outgrown bikes will donate to us," she says.

A committee gets together to do the repairs. Some bikes require minimal work, such as new handlebar grips, seats or tires. Others need more extensive brake or gear work. If bikes are unrepairable, they donate them to the Street/Bicycle Collective in Des Moines.

"We have a variety of people with special skills who help repair bikes, while others don't. Those who can't, help out with other duties," she says.

Narak keeps a spreadsheet of the different-sized bikes. Every few months, when a set number of bikes are ready to donate, Narak contacts West Des Moines Schools Superintendent Matt Adams. He, in turn,



Rotarian Galen Howsare works on one of the bikes to be given away. The Rotary Club prepares bikes that are donated to the group.

contacts the principals to see which students might need bikes. Bike World often donates its van to help haul bikes to schools or giveaway sites.

Last fall, the Rotarians gave away 86 bikes to the Children and Family Urban Movement program.

"We didn't have enough bikes," she explains. "We'll be back with more bikes."

Narak has been involved with the WDM Rotary Club for a long time. She and her husband, Tom, worked in education their entire careers. Helping kids is important to them.

"When I was a kid, everyone had a bike," she reflects. "Today, not everyone has a bike. When they get one, they're so happy to finally have a bike."

Narak says the Rotary Club is always looking for service projects and new members. Past projects have provided winter coats, veteran assistance, tree planting and other service projects.

For more information about donating bikes, contact Narak at [cdnarak@gmail.com](mailto:cdnarak@gmail.com).

For WDM Rotary Club information, visit <https://wdmrotary.org>. ■





# OUT & ABOUT

# CHAMBER Luncheon

West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce January Luncheon was held Jan. 9 at The Rewind Hotel.



Jacob Weiss, Jared Galligan and Randy Weiss



Ryan Moffatt and Brad Munford



Rebekah Walker and Norm Boaz



Jane Angstman and Dylan Whitney



Seth Stimson, Dr. Skylar Mayberry-Mayes and Adam Leach



Zach Veigulis and Ben Goerd



Martha Munro and Melissa Stimple



Jay Mathes, Julie Carlson, Frank Hanson and Mandy Arndt



Brandt Carlson and Stacey Carlson



Melissa Stimple and Brian Shaw



Melissa Vine, Julie Carlson and Perlla Deluca



# OUT & ABOUT



Austin and Breanna Strawhacker at the ribbon cutting for Kith and Kin Collaborative on Jan. 21.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Back in Action Spine and Sport on Jan. 24.



Peter Ginter and Dave Carlson at the ribbon cutting for Kith and Kin Collaborative on Jan. 21.



West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce Rush Hour and Anniversary Ribbon Cutting was hosted by Bank, 270 S. 68th St., West Des Moines, Jan. 23.



Peter Ginter and Kristen Stawhacker Bonzer at the ribbon cutting for Kith and Kin Collaborative on Jan. 21.



Martha Munro and Andrea Love at the ribbon cutting for Kith and Kin Collaborative on Jan. 21.



Olya Safris, Mady Arndt and Melissa McCoy at the ribbon cutting for Kith and Kin Collaborative on Jan. 21.



A ribbon cutting was held for Kith and Kin Collaborative on Jan. 21.



Connie Blodgett, Alison Jensen and Jared Hassel at the ribbon cutting for Kith and Kin Collaborative on Jan. 21.





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# SALE

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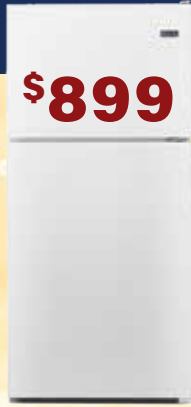
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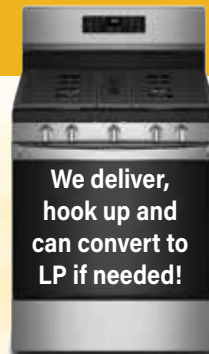


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