

Living



A Special BOND

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

Meet Jayson Gerth
EDUCATION

Sanders find Altoona to be family-friendly
WHERE WE LIVE

Italian crusted salmon with creamy truffle Caesar salad
RECIPE

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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 Sean Dengler

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.

Jean and John Pletchette are able to see grandchildren Leo, Jules and Charlee often since retiring and moving closer to them.

Having fun being close

Moving closer to their grandchildren was important to Jean and John Pletchette.

“We lived in Winterset for 40 years where we raised our family of three daughters,” Jean says. “After we both retired, we made the decision to move to Altoona to be closer to two of our daughters and their growing families. We continue to see our other daughter and family from Maryland three to four times a year.”

They like being close to their grandchildren — Leo, Jules and Charlee — because it means more quality time spent together.

“It is much more convenient for spontaneous gatherings in addition to hosting our family for the holidays. It is nice to be able to attend their activities and special events,” Jean says.

The Pletchettes also enjoy helping with their grandchildren’s activities.

“Our favorite memories include picking up grandkids from school or daycare, as it always seems to brighten all our days,” Jean says. “Reading books and building Legos are always more fun if Grandma and Grandpa are involved. A trip to Over the Top for ice cream is also a favorite.”

Whether it is sports or games, these are also fun times with the grandchildren.

“Our oldest grandson, Leo’s, sports days with Grandpa are a real treat, including golf at Terrace Hills, pickleball, tennis and local playgrounds,” Jean says. “Also, more fun at the Altoona Campus and outdoor Aquatic Center. And Leo never tires of board games, Monopoly, Yahtzee and many others.”

Jean also gets in on the action.

“Jules and Charlee are best friends, and Grandma is their favorite to play with babies, take walks, ride trikes and scooters, sort seashells and cuddle to watch their favorite ‘Super Kitties,’ ‘Bluey’ or ‘Peppa.’”

Being close to their grandchildren has been rewarding for both.

“We are enjoying watching our grandchildren grow and develop firsthand,” Jean says. “We love watching their faith grow along with their social and academic skills. We are creating a bond that we hope will continue to grow for as long as we are blessed to be in their lives.”



The Pletchettes enjoy time when all their grandkids can be with them.



Missy and Jason Leo enjoy seeing their grandchildren daily as Carson, Cade and Charlee live next door to them.

Sharing a fence

Missy and Jason Leo and their grandchildren, Carson, Cade and Charlee, and daughter, Jordan, and her husband, Chris, live closer to each other than most parents and their child’s family do. In fact, they share a fence line, which they say has been wonderful.

“The kids run back and forth,” Missy says. “I can look out my kitchen window and see them playing in the yard.”

Whether it is grilling out or having them come over often in the summer, Missy enjoys her grandchildren.

“Going for walks at night, it looks like a parade,” she says. “We have a wagon and the stroller and the dogs.”

Missy and Jason are incredibly happy about the arrangement.

“It’s just so much fun,” Missy says. “It’s really the best thing that’s happened to us. We get to see them every day. We do breakfast on Saturday or Sunday morning. They come over for breakfast, again for dinner. We cook together.”

Being so close leads to opportunities to be with their grandchildren.

“I go to their school functions,” Missy says. “We go trick or treating. We get to do it all because we’re right there.”

Other fun activities include roasting marshmallows in the fire pit on summer nights, sparklers, and riding on toys in both yards. Having the opportunity to have their grandchildren in the same house Missy grew up in is important.

“I grew up in this house, and then we raised our four daughters in this house. Now our grandkids are at our house all the time,” she says. “It’s just neat to have the homestead. It’s a big factor in this.”



Ron and Ellen Zarn moved from a state away to be close to their grandchildren, Amanda and Brooke. They enjoy being able to attend the girls’ activities and taking them to events.

Missy and Jason are also happy to experience their grandchildren while they are young.

“I’m 53, and my husband is 52. I feel like we’re young enough now that we get to enjoy the kids, and we’re young enough to help out with the grandkids,” Missy says. “We still have energy. My husband will play

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FEATURE

catch with the boys. They play basketball.”

She adds that being able to help out is important.

“I feel like, now that we’ve already raised our kids, we’re in a different mindset. I know how overwhelming it can be to have small children and to be going, going, going,” she says. “It’s just nice for us to be an extra set of hands and have another set of loving role models for the kids.”

Helping out and making memories

Ron and Ellen Zarn moved from a state away to be close to their grandchildren, Amanda and Brooke.

“We moved from Knoxville, Illinois, to be near them in Altoona,” Ron says. “Currently, (the grandchildren) live two hours away at Creighton, but, when home, and prior to college, they were 2 miles down the road.”

It was an easy decision to move to Iowa, Ron says.

“Nineteen years ago, we learned that we would be grandparents to twins. Since our parents were gone and few relatives were close,

we decided to move from Illinois to Iowa,” Ellen says.

Consequently, they have been able to help with a variety of tasks.

“For being so close, we were able to be there whenever needed, including school pick up,” Ellen says. “It was really entertaining listening to them on those car rides. We have been there for athletics (soccer, softball, basketball, volleyball and swimming), music (band, choir and the high school musicals) and vacations.”

“We just got to share in all of their experiences as they grew up,” Ron adds.

Despite living farther away from their grandchildren now, they still hear from them.

“They are in college now working hard towards PT and pre-med degrees, but we still hear from them every day,” Ron says.

Over the years, they’ve created many fond memories with their grandchildren.

“From grandparents’ day at Centennial Elementary to numerous band and choir concerts to almost all sports, most recently soccer, we have been at them all to support and cheer them on,” Ron says.

The couple encourages other grandparents



As their granddaughters, Amanda and Brooke, have grown, Ron and Ellen Zarn have remained close to them and involved in their lives.

to live close to their grandchildren if possible, “so they can share in the memories and have a great time.” ■

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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 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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CALLING ALL ARTISTS

Altoona, Iowa, is more than just a community – it's a place where creativity thrives, ideas flourish, and every artist has a chance to shine. Whether you're just starting out or a seasoned professional, Altoona is the perfect place for your artistic journey to grow. Together, let's make art that reflects the heart and soul of this special city, and celebrate a future where success is for all! We are looking for fresh ideas on welcoming travelers to Altoona while driving them to some of the exciting arts and culture exhibitions Altoona, IA has.

This mural will serve as an artistic gateway into the town, showcasing the unique character of Altoona while honoring its history, present identity, and future vision. We are seeking artwork that will brighten the area, engage the community, and leave a lasting impression on both residents and visitors.

We can't wait to see how YOU contribute to Altoona's vibrant cultural landscape! The mural will be found on First Avenue, our main north / south thoroughfare in Altoona. Very close to the origin point that Altoona is built around. The mural will be a supporting factor to highlight and bring awareness to those who are passing through, while also serving as a commemoration to the community. Altoona prides itself on maintaining our small town feel even in our rapid expansion and development.

Interested in designing a mural? Review the included packet and be sure to send in your submission by the deadline listed. As an artist, you will be recognized for your involvement in the community and commended for your contribution. Local artists from the Greater Des Moines Metro area are particularly encouraged to submit designs.

To find the complete call for artists application, and to learn more about this project, visit the city's website: www.altoona-iowa.com.

ALTOONA'S 2024 RESIDENTIAL TREE PROGRAM

In recognition of Arbor Day, the City of Altoona will be selling a limited supply of trees to residents - limit 2 per household. The trees being offered include Princeton American Elm, Redbud, Boulevard American Linden, and Exclamation London Planetree. The trees will be 3/4" to 1" caliper in a 7 & 10-gallon pot. The cost is \$30 per tree. Pre-sale of the trees will begin March 4, 8:00 a.m. at Altoona City Hall, 900 Venbury Dr. SW Suite A. Trees will be available for pick up at our new location, the Altoona Aquatic Center parking lot at 1200 Venbury Dr. on Saturday April 26, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. For more details, head to Altoona-iowa.com

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SAVE THE DATE: SPRING CLEAN-UP

Metro Waste Authority has set the date for the annual spring clean-up event in Altoona for 2025. Items will be picked up from curbs on resident's trash/recycling pick-up day on Monday, April 14 and Tuesday, April 15. A scrap tire collection event will also be held on both of those days, with collection taking place at Altoona's Street Department (406 5th AVE SW). More details will be shared on the city's social media pages and on the city's website www.altoona-iowa.com.

EMERGENCY ACCESS

Winter isn't over just yet! Maintain your sidewalks and driveway of snow and ice. If you do require an emergency response, a clear approach to your door will be the safest route for the emergency responders and you. Maintain your outdoor lights to illuminate your numerical house numbers. If you call "911" for an emergency response, turn on your lights to make it easier and faster for responders to find your home.



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



MEET Jayson Gerth

Wanted to be his own version of a teacher who inspired him.

Originally from Winona, Minnesota, Jayson Gerth was heavily influenced by his teachers, especially his high school band instructor, “Mr. G.” During his senior year of high school, Gerth decided he wanted to be his own version of Mr. G and pursue a degree in music education. His band instructor helped him by offering him summer work with the high school marching band, giving him responsibility with the group and providing encouragement and feedback.

“Mr. G, as we called him, was — and still is — one of the hardest-working, kindest and most caring teachers I had. He was a role model for us all, and we’d do anything for him,” Gerth says. “I still meet up with Mr. G each summer for coffee to catch up. Now retired, he’s just as encouraging and just as upbeat as he was 37 years ago.”

Gerth came to Iowa to attend Drake University in the fall of 1991. While there, he met his wife, Krista, who also works for the Southeast Polk Community School District. After college, Gerth taught in northeast Iowa and Wyoming before returning to Iowa to be closer to family. Now, Gerth serves as the ninth-grade band director at the junior high school. He has been proud to call the Southeast Polk Community School District his home for the past 20 years.

“I feel a real synergy within our district’s staff, teachers and administrative team. There is an authentic commitment to doing our absolute best for kids. I can also say the same about how invested our community is in supporting the SEP school system. Our community’s support of the schools is incredible,” Gerth says.

In addition to the freshman concert band, Gerth also teaches freshman jazz band and brass and percussion lessons to all eighth- and ninth-grade students and assists the high school marching band staff in the fall.

“Before moving to teach at the junior high building, my role at the high school had me working with freshmen a lot. It’s an age that I enjoy working with. They are so eager to learn and be better, and the growth they experience at that age is tremendous,” Gerth says.

During the remainder of the school year, Gerth is looking forward to watching the progress of this year’s students. He is looking forward to watching his students grow as people with great character.

“As a teacher, I live for those moments when the ‘light bulb’ turns on in a young person’s mind — when they discover something they can do that they thought was otherwise out of reach or when they realize what their potential might be and begin to lean into it. To think that I may have had some small part in that... those are the most satisfying and rewarding moments for me as a teacher,” Gerth says. ■



Jayson Gerth teaches freshman concert band, freshman jazz band and brass and percussion lessons to all eighth- and ninth-grade students and assists the high school marching band staff in the fall.

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ACTIVITY professionals play a key role

In January, we celebrated Activity Professionals Week. Activity Professionals Week is a wonderful time to reflect on the vital role that activity professionals play in the lives of seniors living in assisted livings and nursing home communities. These dedicated individuals do far more than simply organize events or keep residents busy. They are key to ensuring the physical, emotional and social well-being of our loved ones in care facilities.



Activity professionals, also known as recreational therapists or activity directors, are responsible for planning and organizing a wide range of activities designed to meet the individual needs of seniors. From arts and crafts to exercise classes, game nights, music therapy, and outings, these activities are tailored to encourage cognitive function, improve mood, promote physical health, and foster connections among residents. Every resident has unique needs, preferences and abilities. Activity professionals work closely with families and healthcare teams to develop customized activity plans. This ensures that each resident's physical, cognitive and emotional needs are met in ways that bring them joy and fulfillment.

But it's not just about fun and games. Activity professionals are deeply attuned to the needs and preferences of each resident. They work hard to create an environment where every senior feels valued and engaged. Whether it's a trivia game to spark memory, a music session to bring back cherished memories, or a fitness activity to promote mobility and strength, their work enhances quality of life in meaningful ways. Participating in enjoyable activities can have a huge impact on a senior's mental health. It reduces feelings of loneliness, depression and anxiety, which can be common among those who live in long-term care settings. Activity professionals help create a sense of purpose by offering opportunities for residents to express themselves, learn new things and engage socially.

While Activity Professionals Week is an official time for celebrating these incredible individuals, it's important to remember the value they bring every day of the year. Their commitment and passion for enriching the lives of seniors should be recognized and appreciated regularly.

If you are a resident or family member in an assisted living or long-term care setting, take a moment to thank the activity professionals in your community. Their work doesn't just fill time, it fills lives with joy, connection and purpose.

Activity professionals are the unsung heroes of assisted livings and nursing homes. Their dedication to improving the lives of seniors through meaningful engagement is something worth celebrating. So, let's take a moment to appreciate the remarkable impact they have in the lives of our loved ones and recognize the heart and soul they bring to our communities. ■

Information provided by Stephanie Proper, executive director, Valley View Village, 2571 Guthrie Ave., Des Moines, 515-265-2571.



RSV can cause serious illness in infants and older adults.

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- Children 8-19 months who are at increased risk for severe illness.
- Pregnant women in weeks 32-36 of pregnancy.



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Ask your healthcare provider about RSV vaccines for your family.

Source: cdc.gov

SANDERS finds Altoona to be family-friendly

Nature, neighbors and amenities provide much.

Cara Sanders came to Altoona in 2011 to settle down with her new husband at the time. He had grown up in town, and, together, they knew this was where they wanted to build their future.

“We both loved the community and knew it would be a great place to raise our children,” she shares.

That has certainly remained true.

Today, what Sanders loves most about her home is the big backyard. It’s spacious and fenced-in, making it the perfect space for both the dogs and the kids to run, play and burn off energy.

She and her family also enjoy taking advantage of the neighborhood’s natural beauty, often walking around the two ponds nearby.

“My kids ride their bikes, roller skate or walk with us,” she says. “We take the dogs on walks frequently. Our neighbors are also really wonderful.”

Not only does Sanders live in Altoona, but she also works there, allowing her to experience the town’s sense of community from multiple angles.

“I’ve gotten to witness firsthand just how supportive our community is,” she says. “People are willing to help each other out and go the extra mile to make sure others feel safe and valued here in Altoona. I also get to see our community come together to support small businesses.”

That local support is especially meaningful for Sanders, as she owns her own business, a counseling clinic.

Beyond her work, she is passionate about giving back to the community. She has donated to support activities such as SEP Little League, SEP youth football, and various events at her children’s school. Whether through her business or personal



Cara Sanders finds much for her family, including children and pets, to do in Altoona.

contributions, she’s committed to making Altoona an even better place to live.

“Altoona has a small-town feel with easy access to shopping, restaurants and parks to take my kids to,” she says. “We don’t have to leave town in order to enjoy a day.”

From spontaneous neighborhood strolls to cheering on her kids’ sports teams, Sanders embraces everything Altoona has to offer. For her, there’s no better place to call home. ■

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Pilates at Mend

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Noel Turk, DPT

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SE

V. BOYS TRACK

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
03-11-25	3:00PM	University of Northern Iowa	UNI-Dome, Cedar Falls
03-20-25	4:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Waukee Northwest HS
03-24-25	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Urbandale HS
03-25-25	4:15PM	Multiple Schools	Johnston HS
03-25-25	4:15PM	Multiple Schools	Johnston HS
03-25-25	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Johnston HS
03-27-25	TBD	Multiple Schools	Waukee Stadium
03-27-25	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Stadium
04-03-25	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Southeast Polk HS
04-05-25	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	Valley HS
04-05-25	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	Valley HS
04-05-25	11:00AM	Multiple Schools	Valley HS
04-08-25	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Ames HS
04-08-25	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Urbandale HS
04-10-25	4:00PM	CB Bluffs Abraham Lincoln	CB Abe Lincoln
04-12-25	8:30AM	Drake University	Drake Stadium
04-15-25	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Ankeny Stadium
04-15-25	5:00PM	Johnston	Johnston HS
04-17-25	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Urbandale HS
04-17-25	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Urbandale HS
04-22-25	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Northview Middle School
04-22-25	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Ankeny Stadium
04-24-25	5:00PM	Drake University	Drake Stadium
04-25-25	12:00PM	Drake University	Drake Stadium
04-26-25	9:00AM	Drake University	Drake Stadium
05-01-25	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Northwest HS
05-01-25	5:00PM	Pella CSD	Pella HS
05-08-25	4:00PM	District	TBA
05-08-25	4:00PM	Conference	Northview Middle School
05-15-25	TBD	State	Drake Stadium
05-16-25	TBD	State	Drake Stadium
05-17-25	TBD	State	Drake Stadium

V. GIRLS TRACK

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
03-11-25	3:00PM	University of Northern Iowa	UNI
03-14-25	5:00PM	Multiple Schools	Iowa State University
03-18-25	3:30PM	Multiple Schools	Mason City HS
03-21-25	5:00PM	Multiple Schools	Central College
03-29-25	11:00AM	Multiple Schools	Iowa City HS
04-01-25	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Southeast Polk HS
04-05-25	10:15AM	Multiple Schools	DCG Stadium
04-08-25	4:15PM	Multiple Schools	Johnston HS
04-12-25	8:30AM	Multiple Schools	Drake Stadium
04-15-25	4:15PM	vs. Multiple Schools	Des Moines East HS-Williams Stadium
04-17-25	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Indianola Stadium
04-24-25	TBD	Multiple Schools	Drake Stadium
04-25-25	12:00PM	Multiple Schools	Drake Stadium
04-26-25	9:00AM	Multiple Schools	Drake Stadium
05-01-25	4:00PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee HS
05-08-25	4:00PM	Conference	Waukee Stadium
05-15-25	3:30PM	District	TBA
05-22-25	TBD	State	Drake Stadium
05-23-25	TBD	State	Drake Stadium
05-24-25	TBD	State	Drake Stadium



FOR ALL RAMS SCHEDULES

Schedules are subject to change. Scan for most up-to-date schedules.

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POLK RAMS

SPORTS SCHEDULE

SPRING 2025

V. BOYS TENNIS

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
04-04-25	12:00PM	Multiple Schools	Southeast Polk HS
04-08-25	4:00PM	Johnston	Johnston HS
04-08-25	4:00PM	North Polk	North Polk HS
04-15-25	4:00PM	WDM Valley	Southeast Polk HS
04-22-25	1:30PM	Waukee	Southeast Polk HS
04-24-25	4:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Southeast Polk HS
04-28-25	4:00PM	Marshalltown	Southeast Polk HS
04-29-25	4:00PM	Ankeny HS	Ankeny Tennis Center
05-01-25	4:00PM	Urbandale	Southeast Polk HS
05-06-25	4:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic HS
05-08-25	1:00PM	Multiple Schools	North Polk HS
05-08-25	4:00PM	Ankeny Centennial HS	Ankeny Tennis Center

V. GIRLS TENNIS

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
04-07-25	4:00PM	Knoxville	Southeast Polk HS
04-08-25	4:00PM	Johnston	Southeast Polk HS
04-15-25	4:00PM	WDM Valley	Valley Southwoods Freshman HS
04-22-25	4:00PM	Waukee	Waukee HS
04-24-25	4:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Waukee Northwest HS
04-28-25	4:00PM	Marshalltown	Marshalltown HS
04-29-25	4:00PM	Ankeny HS	Southeast Polk HS
05-01-25	4:00PM	Urbandale	Walker-Johnston Park
05-02-25	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	Ankeny Tennis Center
05-06-25	4:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Southeast Polk HS
05-08-25	4:00PM	Ankeny Centennial HS	Southeast Polk HS
05-09-25	10:00AM	Multiple Schools	Ankeny Prairie Ridge Sports Complex

V. BOYS SOCCER

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
03-31-25	7:00PM	Knoxville	Knoxville HS
04-04-25	7:00PM	Indianola	Indianola Stadium
04-07-25	7:30PM	Johnston	Johnston HS
04-10-25	7:30PM	Urbandale	Southeast Polk HS
04-12-25	12:00PM	Davenport North	Southeast Polk HS
04-15-25	7:30PM	WDM Valley	Southeast Polk HS
04-17-25	6:30PM	CB Abraham Lincoln	Southeast Polk HS
04-22-25	7:30PM	Waukee	Southeast Polk HS
04-24-25	6:30PM	Newton	Southeast Polk HS
04-24-25	6:30PM	Newton	Southeast Polk HS
04-25-25	6:30PM	Newton	Southeast Polk HS
04-25-25	7:30PM	Dallas Center-Grimes	DCG Stadium
04-29-25	7:30PM	Waukee Northwest	Southeast Polk HS
05-02-25	7:30PM	Ankeny HS	Ankeny HS
05-06-25	7:00PM	Iowa City West	Southeast Polk HS
05-09-25	TBD	Bettendorf	Davenport Soccer Complex
05-10-25	TBD	Dubuque Hempstead	
05-13-25	7:30PM	Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic HS
05-16-25	7:30PM	Ankeny Centennial HS	Ankeny Centennial HS

V. GIRLS SOCCER

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
03-28-25	5:00PM	Multiple Schools	Ankeny HS
04-05-25	8:00AM	vs. Multiple Schools	Gale Wickersham Athletic Complex
04-08-25	7:30PM	Johnston	Southeast Polk HS
04-10-25	7:30PM	Gilbert	Gilbert HS
04-15-25	7:30PM	WDM Valley	Valley Stadium
04-17-25	7:30PM	Norwalk	Norwalk HS
04-22-25	7:30PM	Waukee	Waukee Stadium
04-24-25	7:00PM	Des Moines Christian Schools	Des Moines Christian School
04-29-25	7:30PM	Waukee Northwest	Waukee Northwest HS
05-02-25	7:30PM	Ankeny HS	Southeast Polk HS
05-06-25	6:45PM	Iowa City West	Iowa City West HS
05-09-25	7:30PM	Urbandale	Urbandale HS
05-12-25	7:30PM	Ames	Ames HS
05-13-25	7:30PM	Dowling Catholic	Southeast Polk HS
05-16-25	7:30PM	Ankeny Centennial HS	Southeast Polk HS
05-19-25	7:30PM	Indianola	Southeast Polk HS

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Be sure to check for cancelations.

Upcoming in Altoona 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.



Live music at Prairie Meadows

- **Neil Hewitt**, Feb. 28, 8 p.m., Finish Line Show Lounge, free, must be 21 or older to attend.
- **Robert Yeltman**, March 1, 8-11 p.m., Finish Line Show Lounge, must be 21 or older to attend.
- **Jerry Beauchamp Band**, March 4, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., polka band, Finish Line Show Lounge, free, must be 21 or older to attend.
- **Taylor King and Nicholas Sinclair**, March 7, 8-11 p.m., Finish Line Show Lounge, free, must be 21 or older to attend.
- **The Unfortunate Sons**, March 8, 8-11 p.m., Finish Line Show Lounge, free, must be 21 or older to attend.
- **Jim Dandy and the Kountry Rebels**, March 11, 11 a.m., Finish Line Show Lounge, must be 21 or older to attend.
- **Royce Johns**, March 14, 8-11 p.m., Finish Line Show Lounge, must be 21 or older to attend.
- **Kick**, March 15, 8-11 p.m., Finish Line Show Lounge, free, must be 21 or older to attend.
- **Kevin Lindgren**, March 18, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Finish Line Show Lounge, free, must be 21 or older to attend.
- **Hudson Road**, March 21, 8-11 p.m. Finish Line Show Lounge, free, must be 21 or older to attend.

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

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 28-March 2
CAP Theatre, 201 First Ave. S., Altoona

CAP Theatre presents "Disney's Beauty and the Beast JR." Performances are 7 p.m. Friday night and 2 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday.

Based on the original Broadway production that ran for more than 13 years and was nominated for nine Tony Awards and the Academy Award-winning motion picture, "Disney's Beauty and the Beast JR" is a fantastic adaptation of the story of transformation and tolerance. The play features some of the most popular songs ever written by Alan Menken and the late Howard Ashman, along with new songs by Menken and Tim Rice.

The classic story tells of Belle, a young woman in a provincial town, and the Beast, who is really a young prince trapped under the spell of an enchantress. If the Beast can learn to love and be loved, the curse will end, and he will be transformed to his former self. But time is running out. If the Beast does not learn his lesson soon, he and his household will be doomed for all eternity.

The play features 28 youth actors. Tickets are \$16 for adults, \$14 for seniors and \$10 for students.



DSM Book Festival

Saturday, March 22, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Franklin Event Center, 4801 Franklin Ave., Des Moines

Readers and book lovers in central Iowa will be thrilled to find an outstanding array of authors appearing at this free, fun-filled event, presented by Beaverdale Books and Beaverdale Neighborhood Association. In addition to author programs, panels, workshops and children's activities, the event will offer attendees the opportunity to have their books signed, visit with publishers, and enjoy mingling with fellow book lovers. For the complete schedule, visit <https://beaverdalebooks.com/dsmbookfestival/>.

Four headlining presentations will be offered in the venue's large theater, including fiction writer Claire Lombardo, historian Alexis Coe, award-winning Hanif Abdurraqib and AViD author C.J. Box.

Healing Hearts Grief Support

Edencrest at Tuscany, 1600 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona, lower east entrance

A supportive gathering for residents and community members to share their experiences, connect with others, and find comfort during their grief journey. Meets every second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Light snacks and beverages are offered. This event will create a safe space for healing and connection within the community.



Covered Bridges Winery events

2207 1700th Trail, Winterset
coveredbridgeswinery.com
See website for tickets and any last minute changes.

- 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

Axe-throwing events

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

- **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.

Be sure to check for cancelations.

Women's Club Art Exhibit

Sunday, March 2 - Saturday, March 8
Hoyt Sherman Place, 1501 Woodland Ave., Des Moines

The Des Moines Women's Club is hosting its 117th Annual Art Exhibition. Central Iowa artists will again display their original art for the viewing pleasure of the public. Admittance is free, and some items will be available for purchase. This year's judge is Diane Kunzler. The opening reception and awards presentation is 1-3 p.m. on Sunday, March 2. Art exhibition gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Gallery Night is 5-7 p.m., Friday, March 7. Open to the public. Refreshments and light appetizers will be served.

The Des Moines Women's Club was established in 1885, and its primary objective was to develop and maintain a free public art gallery in Des Moines. The Hoyt Sherman Place Gallery is home to a large collection of 19th and 20th century paintings and classical sculptures. Twelve paintings from the original DMWC collection can be seen in the Hoyt Sherman Place Art Gallery today.

Elks Annual St. Patrick's Day Celebration

Saturday, March 15, 5:30 p.m.
West Des Moines Elks No. 2752,
2060 N.W. 94th St., Clive

The Elks Annual St. Patrick's Day Celebration will begin with the Foy School of Irish Dancers performing at 5:45 p.m. They will perform for about 20 minutes, followed by the Elks' famous St. Paddy's Day corn beef and cabbage with Irish potatoes meal for \$12 per serving.



Friendly Sons of St. Patrick Pre-Party and Parade

March 15 and March 17

The Friendly Sons of St. Patrick is back with its St. Patrick's Day celebrations. Join them on Saturday, March 15, from 2-6 p.m. at The Shop DSM, 901 Cherry St., Des Moines, for a Pre-Paddy Party, featuring live music from Black Dirt Ramblers, a food truck and cash bar for an at-will donation. The parade is on Monday, March 17, and begins at noon. Participants will proceed from E. First Street, west on Grand Avenue to Eighth Street, with the parade officially ending at Eighth and Grand Avenue. The after party will be in the Des Moines Marriott Downtown Hotel. Visit www.friendlysonsiowa.com for more information.



"Men on Boats"

Through March 2 • Des Moines Playhouse, 831 42nd St., Des Moines

Tickets for "Men on Boats" may be purchased online at 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. 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.

Dome After Dark

Fridays through March, 6-10 p.m.

Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, 909 Robert D. Ray Drive, Des Moines

dmbotanicalgarden.com

The Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden's lush tropical conservatory and Gardeners Show House are colorfully illuminated for Dome After Dark. Flora, the botanical garden's restaurant, serves food and drinks till 9 p.m. ■

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DERMAL fillers

Dermal fillers are used to help diminish facial lines and restore volume and fullness in the face. Many fillers stimulate collagen production to help restore structure to the area treated. Dermal filler can add volume to thin lips, enhance cheeks or the chin, enhance shallow spots, smooth creases and wrinkles and create a more youthful appearance.

Many of the most popular injectable dermal fillers are made of hyaluronic acid. Hyaluronic acid is a natural substance found in your body. It can be found in skin tissue, soft connective tissues, in the fluid surrounding your eyes, in some cartilage and joint fluids.

As we age, we lose subcutaneous fat in our faces. This causes the facial muscles to be closer to the skin's surface. The facial muscles then pull on the skin, causing smile lines and crow's feet. Facial skin also stretches, adding to the loss of facial volume. To soften and smooth wrinkles and fine lines and restore volume loss from subcutaneous fat loss, dermal fillers are used to regain youthfulness.

Many factors affect the facial skin including sun exposure, lifestyle and genetics. It is always recommended that you use medical grade sunscreen and skin care products.

Consult a medical professional to see if dermal filler is right for you. ■

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



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HEALTH

By Dr. Kari Swain and Dr. Elizabeth Ellrich

WHAT is a Heart Rate Variability test?

Heart Rate Variability measures your nervous system's reserve and ability to adapt to daily and eventful life stressors. It looks at the nervous system globally and gives insight into the capacity of your parasympathetics in restoring function and bringing you back to midline after a sympathetic, fight or flight, experience. Experiences like a tough workout, a stressful encounter at work, an argument with a loved one, too much sugar or alcohol, or a poor night of sleep all cause a sympathetic stress response in the body and brain.

A healthy nervous system can adapt to these experiences with ease and return to a parasympathetic, rest and restore, state quickly. However, in our culture of constant stress and busyness, many people are stuck in a state of sympathetic, fight or flight, dominance. In this case, heart rate variability will be low, and this is an indicator that help is needed with nervous system regulation.

A neurological chiropractic exam includes nervous system scans that identify areas of nervous system stress. A chiropractor trained in these methods can work with patients to create individual care plans to address their unique needs.

Heart Rate Variability is highly individualized and fluctuates greatly. There are many factors that affect the trends and results of nervous system scans. Working together with a chiropractor, an action plan can be formulated to reduce stress and increase adaptability. When you are under regular chiropractic care, your nervous system is primed to move you back to midline. ■

Information provided by Dr. Kari Swain and Dr. Elizabeth Ellrich, Swain Chiropractic, 410 Center Place S.W., Altoona, 515-967-9300.

THE BENEFITS of a facial

A facial is more than just a luxury; it offers numerous benefits for your skin, helping to rejuvenate and restore its natural glow. Regular facials can help with deep cleansing, exfoliating and hydrating, giving your skin a fresh, youthful appearance.



One of the primary benefits of a facial is deep cleansing. While your daily skincare routine is essential, a professional facial goes beyond what you can do at home by clearing out dirt, oil and impurities that accumulate in your pores. This process reduces the risk of breakouts and promotes a smoother complexion.

Another key advantage is exfoliation. Facials typically involve exfoliating treatments that slough off dead skin cells, revealing brighter, healthier skin underneath. This can reduce the appearance of fine lines, wrinkles and sunspots, promoting an even skin tone. It also helps your skincare products penetrate deeper, making them more effective.

Facials also provide significant hydration. Many facial treatments use masks and serums designed to replenish moisture and improve skin elasticity. This is particularly beneficial for those with dry or dehydrated skin, helping to restore balance and enhance the skin's natural glow.

In addition to skincare benefits, facials offer relaxation. The massage and calming atmosphere allow you to unwind and reduce stress, which can have a positive effect on both your skin and mental well-being. ■

Information provided by Nikki Morgan, DNP, ARNP, SkinFusion FX, 410 Eighth St. S.W., Altoona, 515-967-0587, www.skinfusionfx.com, nikki.skinfusionfx@gmail.com

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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>

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HOW TO spot AI spoofs

Protecting yourself and staying ahead of Artificial Intelligence (AI) scammers is more important than ever. As technology advances, AI has become increasingly sophisticated, making it harder to detect and avoid.

What is an AI spoof? Scammers use generative AI to impersonate your family, friends, banks, government entities, etc. via phone and video calls to ask you for money and personal information.

To help you stay safe, we've compiled six tips to better protect yourself from AI spoofing.

- **Use multifactor authentication.** With multifactor, you'll use two identifying factors to get into your account, for example a password and a text to your phone. A scammer would need access to both of these to get access to your account. Do not share the passwords or any security codes sent to your phone with anyone.

- **Research before you invest in anything.** All investments involve risk, so you should not trust anyone who offers a "sure bet." Do not send money to someone you met online or via apps, and don't make investments based on their advice.

- **Use stronger passwords.** Follow and exceed the strength



requirements with symbols, numbers, etc. Try not to reuse the same password for multiple accounts. Consider setting up a family password among your immediate family members that can be used to verify who you are speaking to.

- **Enable updates.** Make sure you have enabled auto updates on your apps and phone. This will ensure security patches are in place, making it more difficult for scammers to hack your accounts and device. If you are unsure about the validity of an app, do not download it.

- **Verify information.** If you're talking with someone on video chats or phone calls, make sure it's them by verifying the phone number with the one you already have. Remember, even video chats and online trading platforms that appear real can be fake.

- **Slow down.** Don't let scammers catch you off guard with their false sense of urgency. Take a deep breath and slow down. You do not need to act immediately.

Remember, if something feels off, it probably is. AI spoofing tactics are designed to seem convincing, so trust your instincts and stay cautious. ■

Information provided by Lori Slings, Bankers Trust, NMLS ID: 406021, 3820 Eighth St. S.W., Altoona, 515-245-5624, lslings@bankerstrust.com, BankersTrust.com/LSlings, Bankers Trust NMLS ID: 440379.

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*APR = Annual Percentage Rate. Repayment example: A loan amount of \$150,000 with a fixed interest rate of 5.25% and an APR of 5.307% would result in 360 monthly principal and interest payments of \$828.31. Payments will be higher to account for taxes and insurance. All loans subject to credit approval and other underwriting conditions. Limited time offer. Rates and terms subject to change.



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NMLS ID#: 406021



LIBRARY

ALTOONA Public Library events

ADULT PROGRAMMING

– ages 18 and older

**Protect Your Assets,
Wednesday, March 5**

at 6 p.m. Join us for an informational session on how to protect your assets from court, nursing homes and disputes. Learn about the importance of wills, trusts, how to navigate probate, and Medicaid planning from our expert speaker, Tyler Smith from Smith Law Firm. Registration required.

DIY Scrapbook Bookmarks, Thursday, March 6 at 6 p.m. or Saturday, March 22, at 1 p.m. Make bookmarks using old paper, pressed flowers and other recycled materials. All supplies provided. Registration required. This class will be offered twice. Only register for one session.

Self-Defense Basics, Wednesday, March 12 at 6 p.m. Join us as Officer Blaine Shutts from the Altoona Police Department walks us through the basics of self-defense and how to best protect ourselves in everyday life. Registration required.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

Tiny Art, Wednesday, March 5, from 3:30-4:30 p.m. or Tuesday, March 18, from 10-11 a.m. Be a part of our Tiny Art Show. We'll provide a mini canvas and paint for you to create a masterpiece that we'll display at the library until April. Grades preK-6. Registration required.

Baby and Me, Mondays from 10-11 a.m. Join us for this interactive storytime designed for parents/caregivers, their infants and toddlers, and their stuffies. Ages 5 and younger. No registration required.

Toddler Time, Thursdays from 10-11 a.m. Get ready to read, dance and play at this storytime. Join us for a half hour of books, rhymes and music followed by free play time. Ages 5 and younger. No registration required.

TEEN PROGRAMMING (grades 6-12)

Teen-y Tiny Art, Saturday, March 15, from 2-3 p.m. Create a masterpiece to be featured in our first ever APL Tiny Art Gallery. We'll have tiny canvases and paint ready for your creation to be displayed at the library through April. No registration required.

Pickle Autopsy, Monday, March 17, from 2:30-3:30 p.m. The Claussens gang confronted the Vlastic gang about some missing items in the fridge, and now some gherkins have met their demise. Become forensic pathologists and help us determine the cause of death for these poor pickles. No registration required.

Teen Try-it: Crochet, Monday, March 31, from 6-7 p.m. Try your hand at a new, relaxing craft with crochet or bring a project you're working on. We'll have crochet patterns available to choose from and all the supplies you need to start your own project. No registration required.

To find a complete list of events and to register, visit our website at altoonalibrary.com. Click on the Upcoming Events tab. ■

Altoona Public Library

700 Eighth St. S.W., Altoona
515-967-3881
www.altoonalibrary.com
Monday - Thursday: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Friday - Saturday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday: 2-5 p.m.

WE'RE GROWING!

Iowa Living magazines are currently seeking an

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We offer unlimited earnings potential, paid vacation and sick time, an expense account, health and dental insurance, a retirement savings plan, family-owned work environment and much more.

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Jolene Goodman
Vice President
515-953-4822 ext. 319
jolene@iowalivingmagazines.com



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GOD is at work upstream



Have you ever asked, “Where’s God?” The question sneaks up on us when life throws us a curveball or we get hit with tremendous pain. Our confusion, grief or anger swells, and we wonder, “Where’s God?”

There’s a story in the book of Joshua that helps answer this question. The Israelites are on the verge of taking possession of the land that is to be their home. They have been homeless wanderers for 40 years. Finally, they get to go home. I’m sure excitement filled the camp.

But there’s a problem. The Jordan River stood between the Israelites and their new home — and it was at flood stage. At any other time of year, God’s people could have waded across the Jordan, but the river had turned into a raging deluge.

But God had a plan. He had some of the priests walk into the water. And the Bible says, “As soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water’s edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap a great distance away, at a town called Adam” (Joshua 3:15-16).

Did you catch that? As soon as the priests’ feet touched the water, God was at work immediately. Water began piling up. Eventually, the riverbed dried up, and the people were able to walk across on dry ground. What a miracle. But think about this: When did the people experience the miracle?

Scholars estimate the town of Adam was about 19 miles upstream from where the Israelites stood, far beyond what they could see. That’s where the water piled up. God began working on their behalf immediately, but the people couldn’t see it. The Israelites, at this point, all they can see is a raging river. There are 19 miles of water that have to go by before they see God’s work. To their eyes, God has done absolutely nothing at this point. They could have concluded that, since the raging river was still in front of them, God wasn’t doing anything. But they would have been wrong. He was there, working upstream on their behalf.

God’s people learned an important lesson that day: God is always at work upstream in our lives.

When difficulties, loss and disappointments hit our lives, know that God is at work; we just may not be able to see it yet. So much of God’s work in this world and in our lives is hidden. We see only a part of all that God is doing. This is why we live by faith and not by sight. As you face the difficulties of this life, know there is a God who loves you, who is at work upstream in your life. ■

Information provided by Pastor Nathan Anenson, Lutheran Church of the Cross, 1701 Eighth St. S.W., Altoona, 515-967-4818.

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A WALK down memory lane

It's always special to reflect on a place where you grew up and exciting to think about its future. Altoona has seen a lot of growth and development in my lifetime, and the opportunities for continued success are endless. With February being the month of "love and reminiscing," let's take a walk down memory lane.



Sugar Shack was one of my all-time favorite spots and was almost a weekly stop for me. Walking through the doors to hear the jukebox playing, Chuck and Paulette Franklin welcomed you and wanted to hear all about your day — not to mention they had the best tenderloins, french fries and chocolate malts. It is definitely part of Altoona's history and still going strong in our community to this day.

TooneyVille Tone & Tan in Olde Town: When you needed to get your tan on, this was the place to be. Oh, how I remember the smell when you walk through the doors and down the stairs. The tropical lotions and the warmth reside in my memory to this day.

Pat Barton's Dance Studio: I started at that studio as a little girl and danced all the way through high school, as our daughters did. We would sneak down to **Altoona Discount Pharmacy** (occupied now by Altoona Tax and Rasmussen Bike Shop) to buy candy during our break between classes. Later, the studio moved east to where the original Hy-Vee started next door to **Altoona Floral**.

Do you remember **Terrace Fun Spot** with the big bubble, the mini golf course and driving range, the **Plantation drive-in**, the old **Phillips station** on the corner of Eighth Street and First Avenue? Precious memories of a small town that has added new amenities.

I've been lucky enough to be involved with the **Altoona Campus** for the past 11 years, working part time in the membership department and representing it on the Chamber Board. The Campus has grown over the last 30 years and has been a great addition to the community. I can't think of a better space to bring people together and foster a sense of local pride and camaraderie.

The revitalization of **Olde Town Altoona** is such an exciting development. Breathing new life into historic areas not only transforms our community, but it creates a unique space that blends the charm of the past with new, modern amenities.

I am incredibly proud of my hometown. I've witnessed firsthand the deep sense of community, the way neighbors support one another, and the passion people have for making this place better every day. We are a place where people come together, create lasting memories, and build something meaningful for the generations to come. Altoona isn't just a town; it's a community full of heart, and I'm grateful to be a part of it. ■

Information provided by Amy Ferguson, 2025 President of the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors.

Women of Vision

TREAT YOURSELF

WITH

Lisa Behrends

Speaker, Executive Coach,
Founder of Intentional Connections

Wednesday, March 26th
11:30am-1:00pm
PCA Real Estate
Carriage House
3232 Hubbell Ave., DSM

RSVP Online
www.altoonachamber.org



LISA BEHREND'S

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Honored to be voted by you for Eastern Polk County favorite!



WINNER!
Favorite Chamber of Commerce



Runner-Up Favorite Community Festival or Event: Wine & Craft Beer Fest

RESIDENTS' Choice

East Polk County Residents' Choice winners and runners up were presented certificates.



Russ Gilman, Dominic Schnepf and Joe Krentz accept the Residents' Choice certificate for Terrace Hills Golf Course.



Eric and Kayla Vanderploeg with Eagle Homes accept their Residents' Choice certificate.



Tom and Amy Kilts accept the Residents' Choice certificate for Major Toms Lawn Care.



Elizabeth Paton, Taylor Wesesuk and Note Thanupakorn accept the Residents' Choice certificate for Hy-Vee Pharmacy.



Kenadi Johnson and Natalie Carroll accept the Residents' Choice certificates for Over The Top.



Lauren Kirkley, Megan Peschong, Gabe Dubberke, Ashley Friday, Kati James, Jen Duffy and Steve Olsen accept the Residents' Choice certificate for 21st Century Rehab.



Tony Palmer, Bret Weitzell, Sheena Cochran-Foster, Kenny Bargloff, Eric Berkey, Liv Wendt, Brent Jensen, Kirby Caraveo and Matt Modlin accept the Residents' Choice certificates for Berkey Home Builders.



Suzy Henriksen accepts the Residents' Choice certificates for Suzy's Kitchen.



Kris White, Jamie Nalan and Steffany Rupe accept the Residents' Choice certificate for Hy-Vee.



Jeremiah Duggan, Dave Duggan and Mary Duggan accept the Residents' Choice certificate for ATS Tax and Financial Services.

OUT & ABOUT



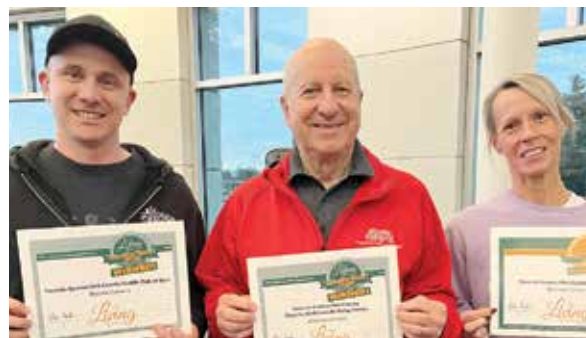
Danielle Rash, Christine Kernes, Martha Cordova, Dr. Corey Conrad, Gabbie Hennen, Kate Tatro, Taylor Hall and Delia Ceballos accept the Residents' Choice certificate for Central Iowa Orthodontics.



Anna Grace Meyer, Bree Darr, Kara Ohorilko and Julia Casey accept the Residents' Choice certificate for Best Day Coffee.



Bill Good and Robin Bartalos accept the Residents' Choice certificate for Prairie Vista Village.



Paul Hartwell, Bruce Mason and Amy McAllister accept the Residents' Choice certificates for The Altoona Campus.



Jen Alexander accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for NuCara Pharmacy.



Brett Bagby accepts the Residents' Choice certificates for Porter Do It Best Hardware and Rental.



Desiree Claypool accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for Style by Desiree Salon and Boutique.



Mike Poirier accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for Honda of Altoona.



Rachel Matson accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for Hy-Vee Catering.



Amy Jensen accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for Anchor Physical Therapy.



Luke Peterson accepts the Residents' Choice certificates for Luke Peterson Financial.



Angela Meek accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for Favorite Realtor.



Riley Duer accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for Duerson Corp.

WELLNESS Expo

Revive, Restore, Renew
Wellness Expo was held Feb. 8 at Terrace Hills Golf Course.



Deanne and Emilee Reiter



Jeremiah Evans and Steve Utterson



Hollie Finders and Katie Gunnerson



Whitney Long and Christy Olson



Duke and Kaitlin Egli



Suzanne Friedrichson and Johanna Hayes



Angela Jones, Erin Whitten and Carole Weaver



Amy Jensen and Kim Zimmerman



Charlotte DePew



Nikki Barkhaus



Christine Clark



Lori Rhodes and Kari Schult

LOVE

AT FIRST DRIVE!



CR-V

Built with adventure in mind and room for across town or cross-country with innovation everywhere you look.



PROLOGUE

Meet the new Honda Prologue! The Prologue's extra space translates to a roomier cabin and more cargo space. It is becoming one of the top-selling electric vehicles (EVs) in the United States and is spearheading the company's intention to offer 30 electric vehicles by 2030.



CIVIC

You're going to find a lot to like about the Honda Civic. It's available as a roomy sedan or practical hatchback and offers a lineup of engines that provide either high mpg or sporty performance.



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Fri: 9am-6pm | Sat: 9am-5:30pm
Hours of Service
Mon - Fri: 7am-6pm | Sat: 8am-4pm

AGENT HIGHLIGHT GINA BOAKYE-DANQUAH



Hi there! I'm Gina Boakye-Danquah (Bo-ahh-ché-Dun-kwuh), your dedicated Realtor with a passion for helping clients achieve their Real Estate goals. As a proud member of the PCA Real Estate Team, I'm committed to providing exceptional service, expert guidance, and a smooth, seamless experience throughout your real estate journey. Whether you're buying your first home, selling, or exploring investment opportunities, I understand that every decision is important. I take the time to listen carefully to your needs and tailor my approach to ensure your goals are met with the utmost professionalism and care. My goal is to make your Real Estate experience as stress-free and successful as possible.

515-291-5661



pca PENNIE CARROLL
& ASSOCIATES
REAL ESTATE