

NORTH POLK

APRIL 2025

Living

MAGAZINE

RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Ankeny/Northern Polk County residents share their favorites.



Pan fried catfish
RECIPE

Meet Sarah Seligman
EDUCATION

Converse family hosts foreign exchange student
NEIGHBORS

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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 all residential households 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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Jenna Antisdell and Rayann Vandersee, Salon PC, which was Residents' Choice for favorite hair salon.

RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Ankeny/Northern Polk County residents share their favorites.



By Tammy Pearson

Residents of Ankeny/Northern Polk 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 the area 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.

North Polk residents won't have far to go to enjoy many of the winners and runners up. Enjoy a stop at residents' choice for favorite restaurant, Rising Sun Café, and The Creamery for ice cream afterwards. Craving pizza? Residents say Papa's Pizzeria

is the place to go, followed perhaps by drinks at Polk City Pub. While you are out and about, stop at Salon PC for a new hairstyle. These are only a few of the North Polk top three. Read on for the others.

If you aren't familiar with any 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 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.

Ankeny/Northern Polk County Residents' Choice for favorite...

(Runners-up in alphabetical order.)

Restaurant

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: Main Street Café & Bakery;
Papa's Pizzeria

Restaurant for breakfast

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: Early Bird; The Breakfast Club

Restaurant for lunch

Main Street Café & Bakery

Runners up: Rising Sun Café; Sports Page Grill

Restaurant for dinner

District 36 Wine Bar & Grille

Runners up: Arcadia; Papa's Pizzeria

Restaurant for dessert

Main Street Café & Bakery

Runners up: The Creamery; The Outside Scoop

Place for ice cream

The Creamery

Runners up: The Outside Scoop; Uptown Dairy

Pizza establishment

Papa's Pizzeria

Runners up: Leaning Tower of Pizza; Wig and Pen Pizza Pub

Bar

Polk City Pub

Runners up: Fender's Brewing; Yankee Clipper

Coffee shop

Porch Light Coffeehouse

Runners up: Café Diem; Rising Sun Café

Server/bartender

Erika Sedgwick - Cabaret

Runners up: Alex Fahey - Rising Sun Café;
Cortney Burchett - Yankee Clipper



Auto service

Aim High Automotive

Runners up: Christian Brothers Automotive; Heartland Tire & Auto

Auto Body Shop

Karl Chevrolet, Inc.

Runners up: Caliber Collision; Dewey Collision Center

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2025 GUIDE!



Jason Thraen

Parks & Recreation Director

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jthraen@polkcitiya.gov

FEATURE

Car dealership

Karl Chevrolet, Inc.

Runners up: Bob Brown Buick GMC; Dewey Ford

Preschool/Daycare

Our Lady's Little Learners

Runners up: Lakes Early Learning Center; Yellow Brick Road Early Childhood Development Center

Nonprofit

The Ankeny Kloth Exchange (TAKE)

Runners up: Big Creek Historical Society; On With Life

School

Southeast Elementary

Runners up: North Polk High School; Northeast Elementary

Park

Big Creek State Park

Runners up: Ankeny Miracle Park; Hawkeye Park

Community festival or event

Ankeny SummerFest

Runners up: Ankeny Farmer's Market; Polk City Four Seasons Festival

Church

Lutheran Church of Hope Ankeny

Runners up: Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Catholic Church; Polk City United Methodist Church

Pastor

Scott Rains

Runners up: Dave Heisterkamp; Wendy Musgrave

Chamber of commerce

Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce

Runners up: Go Polk City Chamber & Economic Development; Uptown Ankeny

Library

Ankeny Kirkendall Public Library

Runner up: Polk City Community Library

Camping spot

Jester Park

Runners up: Cherry Glen Campground; Prairie Flower Campground

Coach

Tim TeBrink, North Polk Football

Runners up: Ryan Halterman, North Polk Boys Basketball; Wyatt Zoske, North Polk Baseball

Teacher

Katie Jones, North Polk West Elementary

Runners up: Ryan Halterman, North Polk High School; Payton Enga, Ankeny Southeast Elementary

Grocery store

Fareway Meat & Grocery

Runners up: Aldi; Hy-Vee

Boutique

Real Deals

Runners up: The Funky Zebras Boutique; Oak & Berk

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FEATURE

Retail Store

Real Deals

Runners up: Hawgeyes BBQ; Polk City Ace Hardware

Thrift store

Stuff Etc.

Runners up: Goodwill; The Salvation Army Family Store & Donation Center

Home improvement retail store

Menards

Runners up: Polk City Ace Hardware; The Home Depot

Nursery or garden center

Earl May Garden Center

Runners up: Canoyer Garden Center; TNT Landscaping & Nursery

Place to purchase a gift for a man

Kohl's

Runners up: Fleet Farm; Hawgeyes BBQ

Place to purchase a gift for a woman

Real Deals

Runners up: Oak & Berk, XoXo Gift & Home



Dr. Christopher Tigges, Polk City Chiropractic, which was Residents' Choice for favorite chiropractic clinic.

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FEATURE

Florist

Carmen's Flowers

Runners up: Grace Fiore Co.; Hy-Vee Floral

Dad/child date spot

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: B&B Theatres Ankeny; The Playground for Kids

Mom/child date spot

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: B&B Theatres Ankeny; The Playground for Kids

Place to take your mom and dad

Rising Sun Café

Runners up: Main Street Café & Bakery; Perkins Restaurant & Bakery

Place to take your kids or grandkids

The Playground for Kids

Runners up: Jester Park; Rising Sun Café

Children's birthday party spot

The Playground for Kids

Runners up: AR Workshop; Urban Air Adventure Park

Golf course

Otter Creek Golf Course

Runners up: Jester Park Golf Course; Tournament Club of Iowa

Hair salon

Salon PC

Runners up: PURE Salon Aveda; Shear Style Hair Salon

Physicians clinic

The Iowa Clinic

Runners up: North Polk Family Medicine; UnityPoint

Dental office

Ankeny Family Dental Center

Runners up: Advanced Family Dentistry; Cornerstone Dental

Orthodontist office

Ankeny Orthodontics

Runner up: Central Iowa Orthodontics

Chiropractic office

Polk City Chiropractic

Runners up: Renze Chiropractic Clinic; Sands Clinic of Chiropractic

Vision care

Ankeny Family Vision Center

Runners up: 20|Twenty EyeCare; Polk City EyeCare

Health club or gym

Legacy Fitness

Runners up: Fitness Ankeny 24-7; Trail Point Aquatics & Wellness

Pharmacy

Hy-Vee Pharmacy

Runners up: Medicap Pharmacy; Walgreens

Cosmetic services

RenuYou Aesthetics & MedSpa

Runners up: Salon PC; Sephora at Kohl's

Physical therapy

Rock Valley Physical Therapy

Runners up: Athletico; The Iowa Clinic



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FEATURE

Alternative health care

RenuYou Aesthetics & MedSpa

Runners up: Ankeny Acupuncture | Total Family Wellness;
Deeply Rooted Healing

Weight loss clinic

RenuYou Aesthetics & MedSpa

Runners up: Farrell's eXtreme Bodyshaping; Legacy Fitness

Medical spa

RenuYou Aesthetics & MedSpa

Runners up: Nova MedSpa; Spavia Ankeny

Dance studio

Michelle's School of Dance

Runners up: Ashlee's Creative Arts Academy; Encore
Dance Academy

Gymnastics and/or tumbling studio

Triad Gymnastics

Runners up: Grace Ballet & Acrobatics Studio; Michelle's
School of Dance

CBD Store

Sunmed Your CBD Store



Tracy Lund, Tracy Lund Care, which was Residents' Choice for favorite cleaning company.

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FEATURE

Financial planner

Kyle Matzen, Edward Jones

Runners up: Brandt R. Hockman, Edward Jones; Justin M. Bjerke, Edward Jones

Law firm

Lamberti, Murphy & Strong

Runners up: Mark Gray Law, PLC; Nading Law Firm

Veterinarian

Ankeny Animal & Avian Clinic

Runners up: Creature Comforts Veterinary Hospital; Ankeny Veterinary Clinic

Lawn care business

Sutter Lawns

Runners up: Rasmussen Lawn Care; Total Quality Inc.

Landscaping company

TNT Landscaping & Nursery

Runners up: Rasmussen Lawn Care; Sutter Lawns

Heating and cooling business

Polk County Heating and Cooling

Runners up: 72 Degrees Comfort Company; Obsidian Heating and Cooling

Plumbing company

Premier Plumbing

Runners up: Polk County Heating and Cooling; Todd's Plumbing, Heating & Cooling

Senior living establishment

Mill Pond

Runners up: The Bridges at Ankeny; Rock Creek Senior Living

Insurance Agency

Cupp Insurance

Runners up: Adamson Insurance & Associates; Cullen & Associates

Realtor

Susie Sheldahl

Runners up: Sarah Carlson; Jacquelyn Duke

Bank/credit union

Veridian Credit Union

Runners up: Grinnell State Bank; Luana Savings Bank

Place for guests to stay

Holiday Inn Express

Runners up: Courtyard by Marriott; Residence Inn

Contractor/construction services/remodeling

A & Co. Design

Runners up: Des Moines Deck LLC; Reese Builders

Cleaning company

Tracy Lund Care

Runners up: Molly Maid; phClean

Painting company

Nick's Painting Plus LLC

Runners up: Five Star Painting; Painting By Jen

Home builder

Redwood Builders

Runners up: Greenland Homes; Sage Homes ■

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WINNER:

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Our Lady's Little Learners Preschool



RUNNER UP:

FAVORITE CHURCH

Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Catholic Church



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Good Friday: April 18

Holy Saturday: April 19

Easter Sunday: April 20

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RECIPE

By Jolene Goodman

CELEBRATE spring's arrival with a skillet fish fry

I am a fan of fish and seafood in general. Healthy and light, it satisfies my hunger every time. Grilling is typically my preparation method, as it is easy with little clean-up and no "fishy" smell.



This time of year, I look forward to the local fish fries. I must confess, "fried" foods do delight my taste buds. So, when I saw this recipe recently, I wanted to give it a try. The Pan-Fried Catfish recipe is perfect for enjoying flaky fillets without the mess. Because this catfish is pan-fried instead of deep-fried, I recommend using butter and olive oil. The mixture adds a delicious, creamy flavor, and it is easy to work with. ■

Information provided by Jolene Goodman, vice president of Big Green Umbrella Media.

Pan-fried catfish

Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"

Servings: 4-6

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup flour
- 2 tablespoons mesquite seasoning (or seasoning of choice, such as lemon pepper)
- 1 stick butter
- 1/4 cup avocado oil (or oil of choice)
- 1-2 pounds thawed catfish fillets (1/2 pound each)
- cooked rice, for serving

Directions

- In pie dish, mix flour and seasoning.
- In skillet over medium heat, melt butter and add oil. Coat fish fillets in flour mixture on both sides. Place fish in skillet and fry 5 minutes then flip and fry 5 minutes.
- Place fish on paper towel to drain excess oil then serve with rice.
- Tip: If skillet is large enough, fry two fillets at once. If frying more than four fillets, discard butter and avocado oil then start fresh before frying more.



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SPRING CLEANING: a time to refresh and reset

Spring is the perfect time to refresh and reset, and, for seniors in assisted living, a little decluttering can go a long way. Spring cleaning isn't just about getting rid of things — it's about creating a space that feels comfortable, safe and calming. A tidy home can make everyday life easier by reducing fall risks, clearing mental clutter, and making room for the things that truly matter. Over the years, it is easy to accumulate belongings, and, while many hold sentimental value, too much stuff can feel overwhelming. By taking the time to simplify, seniors can create a more peaceful and functional living space that enhances their daily routine.

Spring cleaning does not have to feel like a chore. With the right approach, it can be an enjoyable and even nostalgic experience. A great way to start is by sorting items into three categories: keep, donate or discard. Loved ones and caregivers can lend a helping hand, but it's important to let seniors make decisions at their own pace. Tackling one area at a time — like a closet, dresser or bookshelf — helps keep the process from feeling too overwhelming. Items in good condition that are no longer needed can be donated to local charities, giving them new life in someone else's home. Letting go of unused possessions can bring a sense of lightness and freedom, making space for things that bring joy



and purpose.

Refreshing a living space isn't just about decluttering; small updates can make a big difference. Rearranging furniture to create more open space, adding a pop of color with flowers or décor, and incorporating personal touches like framed photos or keepsakes can make a room feel more inviting. Ensuring that everyday items are within easy reach can also improve accessibility and make life a little easier. It's also a great time to check for any safety hazards — loose rugs, exposed cords or poor lighting — and make adjustments to create a more secure environment.

Beyond just tidying up, spring cleaning has emotional and psychological benefits. Holding on to too many things can sometimes weigh us down, while letting go can be a way to embrace the present and welcome new experiences. A clean, organized space can reduce stress, boost relaxation and even promote a sense of independence. Whether tackling the process alone or with the support of family and caregivers, spring cleaning can be an uplifting way to start fresh. With a little effort, seniors can create a home that feels lighter, brighter and ready for the season ahead. ■

Information provided by Michelle Eilander, Residential Services Director, CopperWood at Prairie Trail Senior Living, 2855 S.W. Vintage Parkway, Ankeny, 515-415-4401, copperwoodseniorliving.com.

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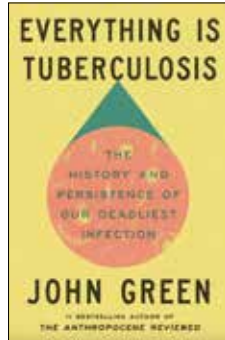
'Everything Is Tuberculosis: The History and Persistence of Our Deadliest Infection'

Tuberculosis seems like one of those diseases from the Victorian era that was left in history like cholera or dysentery. Yet, it lingers large in vast portions of this world that we rarely see, and its insidious nature pervades human history in myriad ways right up to this very minute.

This is a book of questions, rather than answers. There is history and science and tragic personal stories aplenty, but, really, this book serves more as a light to show us all that there are real, solvable problems that exist and how we should use the march of forward progress that has brought us so much to make life better for all of us, not just the few.

The eradication of smallpox, polio and many other endemic human diseases was such a monumental human achievement, done without the heaping mountain of technological resources we now have available. Tuberculosis, for all its insidiousness in the human condition, should be no different. We have proven that we can do this; now, it's just a matter of making it happen. This book is the call to action I hope will take us there. ■

Review by Julie Goodrich



By John Green
03/18/25
208 pages
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Crash Course Books

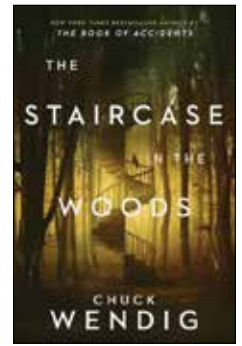
'The Staircase in the Woods'

Stop me if you've heard this one before. A group of kids go into the woods together, find something supernatural and mysterious when tragedy strikes, and their lives are shaped forever. Many years later, that same group goes back to solve the mystery after growing up with all the complex baggage of adulthood and childhood trauma being carried along with them.

This familiar plot is shaken up in a lovely, compelling and very fun way with this newest offering from the always fantastic Chuck Wendig. This book takes a trope we all know and expands and enlivens the familiar beats into something sparkling, lyrical and terrifying.

I loved every second of this thriller, even if I guessed some of the twists. Wendig's writing never fails to enthrall me, and I found myself reading this when I should have been working on other things. It was compulsive in a way I haven't felt in a while. Sometimes touching on the familiar can make a story even more intriguing and addictive, especially when done well. It is why certain series and genres become comfort reading. There are only so many stories to tell; it's all about finding the ones worth telling. ■

Review by Julie Goodrich



By Chuck Wendig
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REMAINING independent at home as you age

Know your options

Michael is 70 and plans to remain in his home forever. He works out, eats well, and is healthy, but his children are concerned; each of the three lives several states away, and they wonder what will happen if their father ends up needing health assistance.



Those concerns make sense. Continuing to live at home as we age is not always possible; chronic health challenges can make living independently ill-advised, and full-time care at home can be expensive.

So, you may wonder, either on your own behalf or on behalf of a family member: If moving into a community is not a desired option and there are concerns about potential health issues later on, what are my choices?

A Continuing Care at Home (CC@H) membership initiative, a program usually

administered by an organization that serves older adults, is one potential solution. CC@H programs are designed to help people proactively focus on their health at home while enabling them to plan financially for potential services and care down the road.

If you're interested in learning more about a CC@H program, make sure to ask specifically what the program includes. A reputable CC@H program not only will offer services to enhance your well-being so you can remain independent longer; it will also help fund future long-term care needs.

Questions you'll want to ask about the program include:

- **Does it feature personal support, such as wellness coaching?** According to a variety of studies, people who embark on a life-enriching program or activity are more likely to succeed with encouragement from a trusted adviser or advocate.

- **Are care costs and options included?** A

solid program will help fund your care, if it's needed, whether through home health care or services in a community for older adults later on.

- **Regarding the organization that's backing the program:** What is its reputation in the aging services industry? Even if the program itself does offer all the services you're looking for, make sure you're comfortable with the organization itself. A reputable provider will have longevity and solid outcomes behind it.

Not all CC@H programs are created equal. If a program appeals to you, make sure it meets both your current and future needs and provides you with peace of mind. ■

Aaron Wheeler is Vice President of Home and Community-Based Services for WesleyLife, which provides health and well-being services, including WellAhead — A WesleyLife Well-Being Experience, a CC@H offering. To learn more, visit wesleylife.org/wellahead.

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INSURANCE

By Corey Hoodjer

ANNUITIES and retirement planning

With all of the uncertainty in the market, annuities have become a more popular topic for many. Should you buy an annuity as part of your retirement planning? That's a great question. Buying an annuity — or more than one — is part of many people's retirement portfolio.

In brief, annuities (sometimes called deferred annuities) are tax-deferred insurance products that offer income payments in retirement. You invest either a single lump sum or a series of multiple amounts with an insurance company. In exchange, you will earn interest on that money during the accumulation phase and will receive payments to either you or your beneficiary during the distribution phase.

The answer to "Do I need an annuity?" depends on your unique retirement plan, what you need and what you're looking for. In most instances, buying an annuity can help diversify your retirement portfolio and offer benefits that other savings vehicles do not. Preparing for retirement today may look different than it did five years ago, and, in times of change, it can be comforting to have the strong foundation that annuities can help provide.

As always, before making any decisions with your money or investment plans, consult with a financial professional who can help understand the unique needs of your financial goals and situation. ■

Information provided by Corey Hoodjer, Farm Bureau Financial Services, 101 E. Bridge Road, Suite D, Polk City, 515-420-6160. The guarantees expressed are based on the claims-paying ability of the life insurance company. Neither the Company nor its agents give tax, accounting or legal advice. Consult your professional advisers in these areas. Registered Representative/Securities & services offered through FBL Marketing Services, LLC, 5400 University Ave., West Des Moines, IA 50266, 877/860-2904, Member SIPC. Farm Bureau Property & Casualty Insurance Company, Western Agricultural Insurance Company, Farm Bureau Life Insurance Company, West Des Moines, IA. +Affiliates. *Company providers of Farm Bureau Financial Services.



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INVESTMENT

By Kyle Matzen

STEPS to take before — and after — a divorce

Going through a divorce is emotionally painful — but does it have to be financially devastating?

Not necessarily. Here's how you can help yourself:

For starters, before the divorce is finalized, determine how you'll cover the costs of any litigation and attorneys' fees.

Also, consult with your divorce attorney about establishing independent financial accounts at banks or brokerage firms. And learn the value of your and your spouse's 401(k)s and IRAs. A financial professional can suggest ways of splitting these benefits.

After the divorce is final, finish building your financial accounts. You might want to close any joint accounts or credit cards you have with your former spouse.

Review your life, auto and homeowner's insurance policies. And, if you were on your spouse's health insurance, you may continue under COBRA or you may need to sign up for your employer's plan, if one is offered.

Finally, consult with your estate-planning attorney and tax advisor to determine whether changes need to be made to your estate plans and tax filings.

Divorce is tough — but, by taking the appropriate steps, you can help move to a more secure and stable financial position for the next phase of your life. ■



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BUILDING bridges

Converse family hosts foreign exchange student.



Brandon and Monica Converse are hosting Lucia from Valencia, Spain, who participated in volleyball this year.

Brandon Converse and his wife, Monica, prioritize travel and experiences over material possessions.

“Overall, we strive to instill this in our daughters as a priority for our family to create lasting memories,” Converse says. “We hoped that, by hosting a foreign exchange student, we could create a fun, notable experience for the student and our family, when our girls are at an age they can remember it, too.”

At the start of this school year, the family welcomed Lucia from Valencia, Spain. Before she moved to Iowa, they exchanged emails to introduce themselves and had a conference call with her family.

Less than 24 hours after arriving in Polk City, Lucia had already started volleyball practice and begun meeting her peers.

The Converse family has enjoyed sharing classic American TV shows and movies with Lucia, such as “Full House” and “The Mighty Ducks” movies. In October, they took a family trip to Estes Park, Colorado, including a visit to Rocky Mountain National Park. For Christmas, their family gift was a trip to Crystal River, Florida, where they saw and swam with manatees.

“Our daughters bonded with Lucia a lot during the trip,” Converse says.

During the holidays, Lucia’s family treated the Converse family to something special — a Serrano ham, a staple in Spain.

“It was a joy for us to experience it with her,” Converse says.

Perhaps the most meaningful part of hosting Lucia has been seeing how close she has become with their daughters, Ella and Lila.

“Through this process, Ella gets to have a big sister in the house, something totally new for her, and Lila has another sister to play games and laugh with, among many other things,” Converse says.

Lucia, too, has gained a lot from her experience in Iowa.

“The most meaningful part of being a foreign exchange student is growing as a person through cultural immersion, having a new family



Brandon and Monica Converse and their daughters enjoyed taking foreign exchange student Lucia to Colorado.



Ella and Lila Converse quickly bonded with their foreign exchange “sister,” Lucia.

and a lot of new friends,” she says. “You get to see the world from a completely different perspective, which can change how you see yourself and others.”

The Converse family has worked with World Heritage, a student exchange program, to host Lucia. Having local representatives to turn to with any questions has made the experience even more enjoyable.

“To help make a further impact with foreign exchange students, I have decided to be one of these local area representatives to assist in placing exchange students with host families in Central Iowa,” Converse says. ■



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ESTATE planning for a child with disabilities

Parents with a child with special needs face extraordinary challenges. In addition to the unique issues associated with raising a child with disabilities, traditional estate planning techniques fly out the window. One concern is how to include the child in your will or trust. Children with special needs often receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Medicaid (Title XIX), which limit the amount of money the recipient can receive.

Previously, parents had two estate planning choices. First, they could include a disabled child in the will or trust. If the value inherited exceeded the applicable resource limit, the child would be ineligible for SSI and Medicaid. Alternatively, the parents could exclude the



child from their estate plan entirely. This option denied the child protection against unforeseen events, such as program cutbacks or insolvency. It also is emotionally difficult for a parent to disinherit a child.

There is now a third option. Changes to Medicaid allow for the creation of a third-party special needs trust. A special needs trust is a discretionary spendthrift trust designed to preserve government benefits for a disabled beneficiary.

If properly drafted, the trust holds assets for the benefit of the disabled child, but that money won't be counted as a resource. Because the money never belongs to the child, it won't interfere with benefits. Parents, relatives, or friends can contribute to a third-party special-needs trust.

Distributions from the trust are intended to supplement public benefits, not replace them. It allows the parents' assets to continue to be used

to enhance the child's quality of life. The trust can cover "extra" needs, such as personal care, therapy or travel.

If the child personally comes into money from inheritance or insurance, that money can be placed in a "self-funded" special-needs trust. The child continues on Medicaid or SSI, and the money in the trust can be used for uncovered expenses related to the disability. When the beneficiary dies, the government takes any money left in the trust. That is why no one should leave money directly to a child with special needs.

It is critical that the trust be drawn by a lawyer who understands the disability rules. The special needs trust allows parents to provide for their children without endangering the child's SSI or Medicaid benefits. ■

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

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RECIPE

A LOADED casserole that's quick and comforting

(Family Features) It's tough to beat an easy dinner that's equal parts comforting, convenient and delicious. This loaded hamburger potato casserole is no exception. Just brown ground beef then mix in a casserole dish with potatoes, bacon, cheese and more before baking for an hour. Find more casserole recipes and beyond at Culinary.net.

Loaded hamburger potato casserole

Recipe courtesy of "Cookin' Savvy"

Servings: 4-6

- 1 pound ground hamburger
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 bag (1 1/2 pounds) tri-colored baby potatoes
- 1 can (10 ounces) cream of mushroom soup
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/2 cup fried onions (optional)
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 1/2 ounces bacon pieces
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- chives or green onions, for topping

Directions

- Heat oven to 375 F.
- In skillet over medium heat, brown ground beef with garlic powder; drain and set aside.
- Cut potatoes into small pieces. In casserole dish, mix beef; potatoes; soup; sour cream; milk; fried onions, if desired; cheese; and bacon pieces. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Bake, covered, 50 minutes then uncover and bake 10 minutes.
- Top with chives or green onions. ■



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POLK CITY Community Library news

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The library will be closed May 26 in observance of Memorial Day.
- The Board of Trustees will meet May 5 at 6:30 p.m. in the library meeting room.
- There are no youth activities in May as we prepare for summer reading.

EVENTS

Fareway Round-up Week: Friends of the Library, May 12-17. When you are shopping at Fareway, choose to round-up your total to the nearest dollar and support library programs. The Friends of the Library provide funds for library programs and the Adventure Pass, which lets patrons visit area attractions free of charge.

All-Abilities Club (for adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities), Wednesday May 14, 11 a.m. In this story and craft hour for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families and caregivers, we'll read stories, make crafts and play games together. Register online at polkcitylibrary.org.

Adult Coloring, Tuesday, May 20, 5 p.m. Join us for a relaxing evening of coloring.

Colored pencils and gel pens will be provided. You are also welcome to bring your own. For ages 17 and older.

Summer Reading Registration at the Farmer's Market, Thursday, May 29, 4-8 p.m. Get signed up for our 2025 Summer Reading Program and have fun as a family. Registration will begin at the library on Friday May 30.

Level Up at Your Library: Summer Reading Programs for All Ages, June 1-July 31. Watch our website and Facebook for all the details.

Chair Yoga, Mondays at 9 a.m. Join Rachel via Zoom. We will be broadcasting the class on the big screen in the library, or you can join us from home. Yoga is for everyone and every body. Yoga is not for flexible people but for people who want to become more flexible. This chair yoga practice will include breathwork, mindfulness and simple, easy movements to release tension, reduce pain and restore your body to optimum movement. Props needed are an armless chair, like a kitchen chair, and a small hand towel or kitchen dish towel. Join the Zoom meeting on our website at

Polk City Community Library

1500 W. Broadway St., Polk City
515-984-6119
www.polkcitylibrary.org
Monday - Wednesday: 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Thursday: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Saturday: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Sunday: closed

polkcitylibrary.org. No class May 26.

Geri-Fit® Strength Training Workouts, Tuesdays at 9 a.m. Strength Training workouts that work for all ages and fitness levels. Geri-Fit is challenging, effective and safe to do. The Geri-Fit® program requires a set of light dumbbell weights, a sturdy chair and water to drink during the workout. Ages 50 and older. Stretch bands and a Zoom link are available upon request.

Ladies' Wednesday Coffee, Wednesdays 10 a.m. to noon.

Sit N' Stitch, Thursdays, 6-8 p.m. Bring your current project and join us for stitching and conversation.

Men's Friday Coffee, 10 a.m. to noon. ■

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FEAR FREE care: your questions answered

Last month, we introduced the Fear Free veterinary initiative and why it is such a big deal for our clinic. But what does it actually mean for you and your pet? And how does it change your veterinary experience? Let's dive into the most common questions we hear.



Q: What exactly does "Fear Free" mean?

A: Fear Free is about making vet visits less stressful for pets. We use gentle handling, a calming environment, and, when necessary, pre-visit medications to help pets feel safe and relaxed. The goal? Happier pets, easier exams, and a more positive experience for both you and your pet.

Q: Why don't you just hold my pet down if they're difficult?

A: While forceful restraint may seem like a quick fix, it actually makes things worse in the long run. Pets who are held down against their will often become even more fearful, making future visits even harder. Instead, Fear Free techniques focus on building trust and reducing anxiety — leading to calmer, more cooperative pets over time. Plus, a stress-free pet is safer for both our team and for you.

Q: Will my pet need medication for vet visits? And are they safe?

A: Not every pet needs medication, but for those that do, it can be a game-changer. We tailor medications to each pet's needs, and sometimes

it takes a little trial and error to find the right fit. The medications we use are safe, and our goal is always to use the least amount necessary to keep your pet comfortable.

Q: Do Fear Free visits cost more than traditional vet visits?

A: While some Fear Free strategies — like pre-visit medications or sedation — may have additional costs upfront, they often save money in the long run. A calm pet means easier exams, more accurate diagnostics and fewer repeated visits. Plus, keeping stress levels low contributes to better overall health, which can help prevent costly medical issues down the road.

Q: How can I help make my pet's visit Fear Free?

A: You play a huge role. Here are some easy ways to help:

- Get your pet comfortable with their carrier ahead of time.
- Bring a favorite blanket, toy or treats for reassurance.
- Stay calm. Your pet picks up on your energy.
- Let us know if your pet has anxiety so we can tailor their visit.

Fear Free techniques don't just work at the vet's office. They can make car rides, grooming and boarding less stressful, too. If you have any questions about reducing your pet's anxiety, we're always here to help. ■

Information provided by Dr. Amanda Gigler, Ankeny Animal & Avian Clinic, 742 S. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny, 515-964-7387, amandagigler@ankenyanimal.com.



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THE WHY and how of deadheading

Keep your flowers blooming longer and your garden a bit tidier with deadheading. Removing faded flowers can promote repeat bloom on some plants, encourage fuller, more compact growth, and tidy up the garden.

Use a bypass hand pruner, garden snips or other dead-heading tool to remove faded flowers. Bypass tools have two sharp blades like scissors, resulting in a clean cut that closes quickly, leaving your plant looking its best. Corona Tool's Ergocut dead header has a finger loop that provides better control and an ergonomic design for less stress on your hands and wrist.

The type of flower will influence how and where to make the cut. In general, remove the stem of faded blooms back to the first set



A gardener uses an Ergocut dead header in the garden. Photo courtesy of Corona Tools.

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GARDENING

of healthy leaves or nearby flower buds.

Remove the flower stem of salvias, speedwells (Veronics), and snapdragons as the blooms begin to fade. Cut below the spike of flowers just above the first set of leaves or the side shoots where the new flower buds are forming.

Encourage additional blossoms and improve Shasta daisy's appearance by removing faded flowers. Prune back just above a set of healthy leaves.

Cut the flowers of plants like Armeria and coral bells back to the base of the flower stems that arise from the foliage. This improves the appearance and encourages more blooms on some of this type of flowering perennial.

Plants like daylilies and balloon flowers require a bit different care. Remove the individual blooms as they fade if you don't like looking at the faded flowers. Once all the individual flowers have bloomed out, you can cut the flower stem back at the base.

Removing fading flowers of fuchsia and lantana will prevent the plants from going to seed and encourage more blooms. Remove any berries that do form to keep these plants flowering throughout the growing season.

Deadheading peonies is strictly for aesthetics and won't extend the bloom time. Remove the faded flowers or seedpods as they form. Cut just above a healthy set of leaves to keep the stems more upright and create a tidier appearance in your garden.

Prevent some flowers, like columbine, Amsonia and Alliums from reseeding and spreading throughout the garden by removing the faded flowers. Even though it won't promote additional blooms, it will help eliminate unwanted seedlings in next year's garden.

Remove flowers as they appear on coleus, grown for its colorful foliage, to promote more compact growth. Late blooming, flowerless varieties and self-branching coleus hybrids reduce or eliminate time spent on this task.

Reduce time spent deadheading by including some self-cleaning, also called free-flowering plants, like impatiens, fibrous begonias, Calibrachoa and moss rose. Lobelia, many of the newer petunias and verbenas are also self-cleaning but may benefit from a bit of grooming. Prune back heat-stressed lobelia and verbena that get leggy and petunia stems that need to be kept in bounds.

Allow seedheads to develop on coneflowers, rudbeckias and other plants that provide winter interest and food for the birds. And consider skipping the deadheading of late blooming perennials. This allows them to prepare for winter and form seedpods for additional winter interest.

And while you are out in the garden deadheading, pick a few flowers at their peak to enjoy in a summer bouquet indoors. ■

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the recently released "Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition" and "Small Space Gardening." She is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and was commissioned by Corona Tools for her expertise to write this article. Myers' website is www.MelindaMyers.com.



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MEET Sarah Seligman

Class named READBowl conference winners.

As a seventh-grade literacy teacher at North Polk Middle School, Sarah Seligman is passionate about reading and finding ways to motivate and encourage students to read.

"I feel that, in recent years, many students have lost that passion — some even think reading is a punishment," she says

She entered her class in READBowl, a free global reading competition for students of all ages, consisting of more than 800,000 students competing to read the most minutes. Malcolm Mitchell, a former NFL football player, created the foundation to help children who struggle to read. He, too, had struggled with reading until learning its importance later in life.

Awards are given to each conference, and, for the last two years, Seligman's literacy class has won the READBowl state middle conference. Seligman's team, consisting of first- and second-hour classes, averaged 2,615.58 minutes for four weeks. They were awarded a certificate and box of books.

In addition, North Polk Middle School began a top 10 readers competition, and winning classes chose from various prizes. About 500 students in the middle school read 30,831.6 minutes over four weeks. Blaze Bouzek's first- and second-hour classes received second place and averaged 2,286.61 minutes. In third place were Heather Sheahan's first- and second-hour classes, averaged 2,152.9 minutes.

Seligman believes reading is crucial for middle schoolers as it encourages lifelong learning, develops background knowledge and strengthens writing skills.

"Reading builds essential skills that help them succeed in school and life," she says.

Seligman has taught 18 years — the last 16 at North Polk. She grew up in a family of teachers on her mom's side and wanted to be a teacher since she was young.

She has witnessed changes in school due to technology, which has its pros and cons, she says.

"The positive side is that learning has become more interactive and accessible," she explains. "However, technology has also become a distraction, and students tend to over rely on it. For example, students no longer pick up a book to read when they are finished with an assignment; they go to their Chromebook."

One of the best parts of being a teacher is seeing her students grow and achieve great things.

"I have kept in touch with many of my past students through social media. It is amazing to see what they have accomplished and realize that you have had a small part in those accomplishments," she says.

Another reason she enjoys teaching is knowing she can make a difference in students' lives by helping them learn, grow and gain confidence.

"Every day is different. No two days are ever the same, especially in middle school," she reflects. "Seeing a student go from struggling to succeeding in reading and writing is incredibly rewarding." ■



Sarah Seligman is passionate about the importance of reading. She encouraged her classes to join the READBowl challenge. The students came in first in their conference.

WHAT IS FDIC Insurance?

You've likely seen the FDIC logo and heard of it, but what is it actually, and how does it work?

FDIC stands for Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. The FDIC is an independent agency of the U.S. government that protects depositors (that's you) against loss if an FDIC-insured bank should fail or close. While it is not common, it can happen. Understanding how FDIC insurance works is important.

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FDIC deposits are insured up to at least \$250,000 per depositor, per category. The insurance is calculated dollar-for-dollar and includes any interest and principal amounts owed to the depositor.

Here's an example to help you understand: A customer has a CD account in their name with a principal balance of \$150,000 and \$2,000 in interest accrued. The total amount, \$152,000, would be insured.

What else you need to know about FDIC insurance

While FDIC insurance provides financial security in the event of a failed financial institution, there are some key points to be aware of, listed below.

Not all products are insured. Anything that isn't a deposit, such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds and life insurance policies, isn't covered. Typically covered are checking and savings accounts, CDs (Certificates of Deposit), and MMDA (Money Market Deposit Accounts).

There is a limit of \$250,000 per depositor, per ownership category. You can have multiple categories at the same FDIC-insured bank, each with up to \$250,000 coverage. There are some exceptions for revocable and irrevocable trust accounts.

Speak with a member of your banking team today to learn about the additional ways to increase your FDIC coverage.

Financial institutions need to take every precaution to protect your financial assets. However, it's also essential for you to understand what they offer and how they function. If you're ever concerned about the financial assets you hold and whether they're insured, reach out to your banker today to verify. ■

Information provided by Eric Hockenberry, Market President, Home State Bank, 101 E. Bridge Road, Polk City, 515-329-8801.



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For more information or examples of common scams, contact one of our Universal Bankers.

RECENT COMMUNITY IMPACT

We were honored to donate \$1,000 to the Polk City Friends of the Park organization in January.



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Be sure to check for cancellations.

Upcoming in North Polk Living magazine:

Pampered Pets: Do you enjoy pampering your pet(s)? We are looking to interview people whose cats, dogs and other animals live a life of luxury. If you are one of those spoiling their critters rotten and proud of it, reach out to be included in our May issue. We want to hear your story! Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.

Celebrate North Polk

Saturday, May 31, 5:30-11:30 p.m.
DMACC FFA Enrichment Center,
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Celebrate North Polk is the biggest event of the year that raises money for the additional expenses North Polk Community School has and creates opportunities for students, athletes and the arts. CNP distributes funds equally among Fine Arts Boosters, Athletic Booster Club and North Polk Foundation. To purchase tickets, visit www.celebratenorthpolk.org.

Library Book Clubs

1500 W. Broadway St., Polk City

• **Monday Book Club, Monday, April 21, 2 p.m., “Midnight at the Blackbird Café” by Heather Webber.** It was supposed to be a quick trip to close the café and settle her grandmother’s estate, but despite her best intentions to avoid forming ties or even getting to know her father’s side of the family, Anna Kate finds herself inexplicably drawn to the quirky Southern town her mother ran away from so many years ago and the mysterious blackbird pie everybody can’t stop talking about.

• **Wednesday Book Club, Wednesday May 7, 7 p.m. “Peace Like a River” by Leif Enger.** Raised on tales of cowboys and pirates, 11-year-old Reuben Land has little doubt that miracles happen all around us, and that it’s up to us to “make of it what we will.” The quiet Midwestern life of the Lands is upended when Davy, the oldest son, kills two marauders who have come to harm the family; unlike his father, he is not content to leave all matters of justice in God’s hands. The morning of his sentencing, Davy — a hero to some, a cold-blooded

murderer to others — escapes from his cell, and the Lands set out in search of him.

• **Monday Book Club, Monday, May 19, 2 p.m. “The Magnificent Lives of Marjorie Post” by Allison Pataki.** “Mrs. Post, the President and First Lady are here to see you. . . .” So begins another average evening for Marjorie Merriweather Post. Presidents have come and gone, but she has hosted them all. Marjorie’s journey began gluing cereal boxes in her father’s barn as a young girl. No one could have predicted that C.W. Post’s Cereal Company would grow into the General Foods empire and reshape the American way of life, with Marjorie as its heiress and leading lady. Not content to stay in her prescribed roles of high-society wife, mother and hostess, Marjorie dared to demand more, making history in the process.

• **Cookbook Club, Thursday, May 22, 6 p.m.** Gather around for a fun potluck social hour. This session’s theme is barbecue. Bring your favorite barbecue dish or side to share, and bring along a written copy of the recipe as well. Registration recommended but not required.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations.



Playhouse Summer Classes

Various dates

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

The Des Moines Playhouse offers students from kindergarten through high school more than 30 different classes and camps this June-August to fill the long summer days and keep minds active. A complete list of classes and registration is available at dmplayhouse.com. Theatre arts education at The Playhouse provides students with the opportunity to explore, create, imagine and express themselves, all within a safe, nurturing environment. Every class at The Playhouse is unique and led by the theatre's professional teaching artists. For more information on summer theatre camps and other Playhouse educational offerings, contact The Playhouse education department at 515-974-5365.



Family Easter

Saturday, April 19

Living History Farms, 11121
Hickman Road, Urbandale

Celebrate Easter with an old-fashioned flair. Ongoing egg hunts will be held for toddlers to 12-year-olds, with allergy-free options available. Attendees will also find Easter games, crafts and stories; a baby chick exhibit; demonstrations; horse-drawn wagon rides; pictures with the Easter Bunny; and more. For more information, visit lhf.org/event/family-easter/.

Iowa Wild home games

Wells Fargo Arena, 233 Center
St., Des Moines

iowawild.com

- April 19 at 6 p.m. vs. Grand Rapids Griffins

Iowa Cubs home games

Principal Park, 1 Line Drive, Des
Moines

www.iowacubs.com

- April 18 at 7:08 p.m. vs. St. Paul
- April 19 at 3:08 p.m. vs. St. Paul
- April 20 at 1:08 p.m. vs. St. Paul
- April 29 at 6:38 p.m. vs. Buffalo
- April 30 at 12:08 p.m. vs. Buffalo

Iowa Barnstormers home games

Wells Fargo Arena, 730 Third St.,
Des Moines

www.theiowabarnstormers.com

- April 26 at 7:05 p.m. vs. Fishers Freight

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Be sure to check for cancellations.

Curbside yard waste collection underway

Easily dispose of leaves, grass clippings and more right at your curb. Yard waste curbside collection in Polk City occurs on Friday, the regular garbage collection day. You can set out a variety of yard waste for curbside collection, including: twigs and branches, leaves, grass clippings and garden vegetation (such as spoiled vegetables on the vine or wilted flowers from landscaping).

Items that are not accepted include: dirt, mulch, rocks, food or pet waste.

You have two options for curbside collection with Metro Waste Authority:

- **Bags and Stickers:** Place yard waste in Compost It! bags or store-brand bags with a green Compost It! sticker attached. Set bags at the curb by 6 a.m. on your regular collection day. Bags and stickers are available at many local retailers.

- **Cart Service:** If you have a lot of yard waste, consider a Compost It! cart. Just fill the 96-gallon cart and place it at the curb on your regular collection day each week.

Logs, stumps, large branches, rocks and dirt are not accepted in the curbside Compost It! program, but they can be self-hauled to Metro Park East Landfill, where yard waste is accepted year-round.

Once collected, your lawn and garden debris is taken to Metro Compost Center at Metro Park East Landfill. There, Metro Waste Authority's team turns and maintains the yard waste for four to nine months as it decomposes. The final product is Grow Gold Compost, a natural soil enhancer available for purchase for your home, garden or landscaping projects.

Have questions about yard waste or the Compost It! program? Visit www.WhereItShouldGo.com/YardWaste or give Metro Waste Authority a call at 515-244-0021.

Earth Day at the Botanical Garden

Saturday, April 19

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

Celebrate Earth Day and explore the vital connections between plants, people and the natural world at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. Participate in family-friendly activities, explore the garden, and engage with a variety of community partners that promote environmental awareness, sustainability and Earth-friendly practices, all for free. For more information, visit dmbotanicalgarden.com/event/earth-day/.



Vendor Market

April 19, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Outlets of Des Moines, 801 Bass Pro Drive N.W., Suite 315, Altoona

Each show has a variety of vendors from Avon, Living Oils, Small Town Laser, Unicorn Clouds, MJ's Hometown Honey, 3D by LouAnn, Tupperware, Tastefully Simple, Good Vibrations Gems & Crystals, plus others. Come check out the vendors and buy local. If interested in being a vendor, email k2marketplacemagic@gmail.com for information.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com

Be sure to check for cancellations.



Des Moines Performing Arts

Various dates

Des Moines Civic Center, Cowles Commons, Stoner Theater, Temple Theatre, 221 Walnut St., Des Moines
desmoinesperformingarts.org

- April 23: Neil Degrasse Tyson: "An Astrophysicist Goes To The Movies"
- April 26: Des Moines Symphony, "Music From Final Fantasy"
- April 27: 360 ALLSTARS
- April 30: The Rock Orchestra by Candlelight

DMPA Concert Series

Various dates, 7 p.m.

Temple Theater, 1011 Locust St., Des Moines

Des Moines Performing Arts' concert series, "Made in the Midwest," highlights the artistry of local musicians in the intimate Temple Theater. Celebrating the talents of independent artists from across our region, guests will enjoy a unique experience where the musicians take center stage in a venue known for its unparalleled acoustic quality.

- April 25: Allegra Hernandez, rock
- May 9: Abbie Sawyer, folk/Americana

Tickets start at \$20/show. You can purchase tickets by visiting DMPA.org, calling 515-246-2300, or stopping by the Civic Center Ticket Office at 221 Walnut St. You can also purchase tickets night of at the Temple Theater Ticket Office starting two hours before a performance.

Zoo Bites

Zoo Bites is a community education class made possible through a partnership between Ankeny Community Schools and Blank Park Zoo. Students in grades K-3 with an adult are invited to join an evening of fun mixed with a bite of learning. Explore through science experiments, snacks and more. These classes focus on family bonding by discovering more about animals. Each class has a fun animal-based activity, interactive materials, and two live animal visitors. Students do not need to be enrolled in Ankeny schools to participate. Registration is available at: www.ankenyschools.org/community/community-engagement/course-registration.

Saturday, June 28 from 10:15-11:15 a.m., "Scaly not Slimy."

Discover the softer side of snakes.

Saturday, July 12 from 10:15-11:15 a.m., "Pollen-Nation."

Pollinators are all around us. Discover their importance with one of our favorite foods: pizza.

Safe in the Sun 5K/10K Run

Saturday, May 3, at 9 a.m.

Ada Hayden Heritage Park, 5205 Grand Ave., Ames

The public is invited to raise awareness and funds for melanoma research with the Safe in the Sun 5K/10K Run, hosted by the Cancer Bucket Foundation. Whether you're a runner, a walker or a supporter of the cause, the Safe in the Sun Run offers a meaningful opportunity to help in the fight against melanoma and skin cancer. To register, visit cancerbucket.org/events.

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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Be sure to check for cancellations.



WDM Elks Spring Style Show Fundraiser

Saturday, April 26, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

West Des Moines Elks Lodge No. 2752, 2060 N.W. 94th St., Clive

Tickets are \$15 each or reserve a table for eight for \$130 or a table for four for \$70. The Style Show starts at 11 a.m. with a salad luncheon at 12:30 p.m. and door prize drawing at 2 p.m. Many fantastic vendors including K.A.B.E. & Co clothes and accessories will be available. Funds raised will benefit Veterans, Children's Christmas, and other Elks-approved charities and outreach.

Planned Parenthood - Shine

Tuesday, May 13, 6-8:30 p.m.

Planned Parenthood North Central States is hosting its annual event honoring Planned Parenthood in Iowa: Planned Parenthood - Shine. Enjoy an evening with friends old and new, along with cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and a photo booth, while the nonprofit recognizes its progress, strengthens its commitment, and ensures that expert health care, education and advocacy remain accessible for all. For more information, visit ppncs.org/shine.

Concrete Cruizers Charity Car Show

Saturday, May 17

Deery Chevrolet, 6000 E. University Ave., Pleasant Hill

Registration is from 8-11 a.m. with awards starting at 3 p.m. Preregister by May 3 for \$20 to get a free T-shirt. Day of show cost is \$25 without a T-shirt. The event will include an auction, music, food and goodie bags for the first 100 registrants. For more information, call 515-299-3165 or 515-360-8257.

Eat | Drink | Architecture

Sunday, April 27, 1 p.m. shotgun start Iowa Taproom, Royal Mile, Hessen Haus, Fong's Pizza (choose your preferred departure location when you register)

The Iowa Architectural Foundation announces the return of Eat|Drink|Architecture, a one-of-a-kind walking tour that celebrates the intersection of notable architecture, delicious food and craft beverages. Eat|Drink|Architecture offers attendees an engaging and social experience, guiding them through a curated walking route featuring notable architectural landmarks and unique spaces. Along the way, participants will enjoy stops at partnering Full Court Press restaurants, each offering a taste of their signature flavors. This year's route will feature the new Fong's Pizza location in the East Village. Proceeds support IAF's educational programming, including Architecture in the Schools and Architecture in the Community initiatives, which promote architectural appreciation and literacy throughout Iowa. Tickets and additional details are available at EDA2025.eventbrite.com. Tickets are \$50 and must be purchased in advance. ■

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SPRING into action in Polk City

As the sunshine returns and the days grow warmer, Polk City comes to life with activity, color and opportunity. Spring is the perfect time to reset, whether that means organizing your home, refreshing your goals or making more room in your schedule to enjoy what matters most.

This season, we encourage you to be intentional: get outside, reconnect with your neighbors and make a point to support our local businesses. Grab a gift for yourself or a friend from Oak & Berk, enjoy a meal or a happy hour on the patio at Arcadia, or tee off for a round of golf at Tournament Club of Iowa. When you shop or dine locally, you're doing more than making a purchase — you're investing in the future of our community.

Looking for ways to make the most of the season? Stop by Ace Hardware to tackle your spring to-do list or create a custom North Polk T-shirt — or one for your business or upcoming event — at P&M Apparel. While you're out and about, take time to walk through our history at the Big Creek Historical Society, a hidden gem that brings Polk City's story to life.

Spring is also a great time to get involved. Our calendar is filling up with opportunities to gather and celebrate — from seasonal events and ribbon cuttings to the return of the Polk City Farmers Market. These moments not only strengthen community bonds, they give us a reason to slow down and enjoy the town we call home.

And let's not forget — getting outside and soaking up the sunshine is more than just fun. It's good for your health, your mood and your overall well-being. So, take a deep breath, get moving, and let the fresh air inspire you. Be sure to enjoy one of the many bike and walking trails in town.

At Go Polk City, we champion the businesses and people who make Polk City a place worth calling home. As we head into spring, we invite you to join us. Shop local, spread the word, and be part of what makes this community strong.

Here's to fresh starts, sunny skies, and a town full of possibilities. ■



Information provided by Staci Allen, Executive Director,
Go Polk City Chamber, P.O. Box 226, Polk City IA 50226,
515-984-3098, admin@polkcitychamber.com.

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Jacuzzi Bath Remodel can install a new, custom bath or shower in as little as one day. For a limited time, waving all installation costs! (Additional terms apply. Subject to change and vary by dealer. Offer ends 6/30/25. 1-844-501-3208 (ACP)

MobileHelp America's premier mobile medical alert system. Whether you're home or away. For safety & peace of mind. No long term contracts! Free brochure! Call 1-888-489-3936 (ACP)

Replace your roof w/the best looking & longest lasting material steel from Erie Metal Roofs! 3 styles & multiple colors available. Guaranteed to last a lifetime! Limited Time Offer up to 50% off install + Additional 10% off install (military, health & 1st responders.) 1-833-370-1234 (ACP)

Consumer Cellular - same reliable, nationwide coverage as the largest carriers. No long-term contract, no hidden fees free activation. All plans feature unlimited talk & text, starting at just \$20/mo. Call 1-877-751-0866 (ACP)

DIRECTV Stream - Carries the most local MLB Games! Choice Package \$89.99/mo for 12 mos Stream on 20 devices at once. HBO Max included for 3 mos (w/Choice Package or higher). No contract or hidden fees! Some restrictions apply. Call IVS 1-866-859-0405 (ACP)

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Bath & shower updates in as little as 1 day! Affordable prices - No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & military discounts available. 1-877-543-9189 (ACP)

Eliminate gutter cleaning forever! LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule free LeafFilter estimate today. 20% off Entire Purchase. 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-833-610-1936 (ACP)

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Become a published author. We want to read your book! Dorrance Publishing trusted since 1920. Consultation, production, promotion & distribution. Call for free author's guide 1-877-729-4998 or visit dorranceinfo.com/ads (ACP)

Prepare for power outages today with a Generac Home Standby Generator. Act now to receive a free 5-Year warranty with qualifying purchase* Call 1-855-948-6176 today to schedule a free quote. It's not just a generator. It's a power move. (ACP)

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Water damage cleanup & restoration: A small amount of water can lead to major damage in your home. Our trusted professionals do complete repairs to protect your family and your home's value! Call 24/7: 1-888-872-2809. Have zip code of service location ready when you call! (ACP)

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JV Soccer

The North Polk vs. ADM JV Soccer match was held in Adel on April 3.



Dylan Twedt



Levi Lindell



Joshua Lee



Will Warrick



Nathan Pitlock



JJ Bateman



Cael Cotter



Kevin Marquez Espinoza



Chase Friedman and Will Warrick



Robert Spencer



Marcus Welch



Liam Triplett



THE COMETS CORNER

NEWS FROM NORTH POLK CSD

APRIL 2025

NORTH POLK STUDENTS AWARDED TOP HONORS AT ISU STATE SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FAIR

Ten Comet students had the opportunity to present at the 68th Annual State Science and Technology Fair, held at Iowa State University, showcasing their projects for a chance to win scholarships and awards. The projects included: 'pH Difference in Filtered Water,' 'Pets and Their Dominant Paw,' 'Iowa's Biggest Problem: Agricultural Pollution,' and more.

The event served as a valuable opportunity for students to collaborate and gain insights from peers across the state. Additionally, it allowed presenters to compete for a variety of awards and competitive scholarships. Several students were recognized with awards and received scholarships to support their postsecondary education, including the NASA Earth System Science Award, as well as scholarships from Morningside and Loras Colleges.

In addition, NPHS student Hayden



Ocheltree's presentation titled 'Human Affections Effect on Poultry Growth' was named an ISEF Award Winner! Recognized as one of the top three freshman presenters in the state, she will have the opportunity to attend the International Science and Engineering Fair in Columbus, OH, as an observer, where she will learn alongside some of the brightest students in the country.

Congratulations to the science department for their outstanding performance and to all of our students for their hard work on these projects!



LET'S GET REGISTERED FOR SCHOOL | 2025-2026

Amid the happenings of the school day, along with after-school activities and extracurriculars, spring can feel like a whirlwind. However, don't let time slip away! Important registration deadlines for enrollment and transportation are fast approaching.

Registration for the 2025-2026 school year is now open for all grades, from TK through 12. To ensure transportation requests are processed and to guarantee busing for the start of the school year, you must register and request transportation by June 1st. Any requests made after this date may not be eligible for transportation at the start of the school year.

For families with young children enrolling at North Polk for the upcoming year, please follow the district on Facebook, as your email will not be active to receive district updates until July 1st. If there have been any changes since you submitted the registration form, please reach out to the District Registrar, Lynette Foster.



Help us meet our goal of having 100% of returning students registered. **To get started, visit northpolk.org/enroll.** Don't delay, register today!



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