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MAY 2025

Living

MAGAZINE

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WELCOME

A LITTLE dog and a pink sweater

My only requirement in searching for a family pet was that it had to be a short-haired, masculine-looking dog. Now, before you start calling me sexist, you should know that I didn't really care if the dog was male or female. In fact, I preferred female dogs. I just didn't want a poodle named Fifi.

After lengthy searches, we eventually adopted a female miniature pinscher named Pudding. She was quite small and quite chubby. As such, Pudding was a fitting name, but it did not match the masculinity thing I was seeking. So, we compromised a bit and renamed her Roxy.

Keep in mind that, at the time, I was the father of three young girls, all who mothered this dog like a newborn child. They showered her with clothes and toys and treats. I wanted to be the dog.

As the dad, I was charged with the doggy duty of taking Roxy out for bathroom breaks and walks, and I was bound and determined to work the pudding off this dog. What I didn't expect was the harassment from my neighbor, Robert, as he mocked me and my little dog in her pink sweater.

"Hey, Goodman," he yelled at me one morning after one of our first walks. "You are looking tough with that little dog in the pink sweater!"

It clearly was not a macho moment. I got over it, eventually. But that pink sweater quietly disappeared.

Two decades and three dogs later, we were still pampering a pet. More clothes. More toys. More treats. And now for dogs of all sizes.

Today, we no longer have a dog, but we continue to hang on to much of the dog "stuff," apparently just in case we opt to pamper one again someday.

Time will tell. Meanwhile, the royal treatment we gave our dogs pales in comparison to how some residents spoil theirs. Whether you are a pet lover or not, you will certainly be amused by these stories.

Have a great month, and thanks for reading. ■



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Pampered Pets

Residents share how they go the extra mile to spoil their critters

By Rachel Harrington

Many pet owners view their animal companions as part of the family — deserving of the best care, lots of attention, and at least a few perks. Besides the usual walks, pet beds and toys, some of these pampered pets get extra special treatment: pup cups from drive-throughs, birthday parties, paw soaks and a special place in those important days of their owners' lives — as well as in their hearts.

Juliana and Grant Thomas include their dalmatian, Olivia Oddball, in many family activities.

FEATURE

Axolotl requires special care

Susan Chapman's daughter is obsessed with axolotls. Many children, like her, who play Minecraft have grown familiar and fond of the tiny reptiles since they appear in the game. Axolotls are small reptiles that are kin to tiger salamanders and have the unique ability to regenerate any part of their body that gets cut off or injured, including their brain.

"They really are fascinating creatures," Susan says.

Last year for her daughter's birthday, she gifted her the unique pet, which they named Boba.

Months of research were conducted by Susan before making the purchase of her daughter's pet. She had to prepare and cycle the tank Boba would live in for three months to build up bacteria before they brought her home. Axolotls produce a lot of waste, and the bacteria is necessary for keeping the water clean.

"I bought her online as a mystery axolotl from Axolotl Planet," Susan recalls. "We think Boba is a female, but we can't know until it is at least a year old. We believe she is a rescue because there's a nick in her tail. She was only 5

inches long when we got her, and she is now 9 inches long and is fully mature now that she is almost a year old."

Axolotls are naturally and biologically finicky, and their care seems like pampering. They require a minimum of a 20-gallon tank, low light, very specific water temperatures, and a specialized diet.

"We recently got Boba a 55-gallon tank," Susan shares. "Boba had a rock hide in her tank but outgrew it, so we got her a log to hide in. We put living plants, dwarf grass and anubis in her tank, as well as a sponge filter. She also has a round air stone that she likes to sit on in the bubbles it produces. She has a canister filter, a water chiller to keep the water temperature at 64 degrees, and low light."

Susan's family enjoys watching Boba eat. "They're slightly blind and will attack almost anything in front of them," Susan explains. "When we first got her, we fed her red wigglers and earthworms, but she got really picky and only wants red wigglers. She will play with the worms by eating them, spitting them out, then eating them again."

Boba is also fed small pieces of raw salmon



Susan Chapman's daughter has an axolotl named Boba for a pet. It requires a lot of proper care to thrive.

for a treat and repashy pie, which is basically mushed up bugs that they Chapmans have to mix, cut in small pieces, and hand feed her every day with small tongs. Boba occasionally gets to eat bloodworms, but because they don't have nutritional value for her, they are only



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occasional treats.

"We also put ghost shrimp in her tank because she can have them as a snack, but she ate all of them up quickly," Susan remembers.

Axolotls shouldn't be handled often due to the slime coat they wear, so Susan only does so after she has washed her hands well to rid them of any germs and parasites, and only when she must clean the tank. Her daughter has taken Boba for a show and tell at Girl Scouts, and the neighborhood kids often come over to watch her. The whole family has grown fond of Boba and even have the T-shirts to prove it.

A dalmatian fascination

Juliana Thomas was a 1990s baby and says her Disney obsession of choice was "101 Dalmatians." Her love for dalmatians remained in adulthood, and, in 2014, at age 24, she got her first dog, a dalmatian puppy she named Olivia Oddball.

"I got her right around Thanksgiving," Juliana remembers.

For several years, Olivia enjoyed going to doggie daycare three times a week to burn off energy. Now older, her visits to doggie daycare are only once a week. When her doggie daycare had a prom day, Olivia arrived decked out in a necklace and high heels. She enjoys getting ice cream at Wendy's Ice Cream Shoppe. She accompanies Juliana to drop the kids off at school. During Halloween last year, Olivia went as herself while Juliana's kids were dressed as firefighters.

"We called ourselves the Thomas Firehouse," Juliana recalls.

Olivia gets her own Santa stocking, her own doggie Easter basket and, when it is her birthday, Juliana's family throws her a party complete with



With a dalmatian as a pet, the Thomas children thought it would be fun to dress as firefighters and include their dog in the fun.

treats, party hats and candles.

On any given day, you may find Olivia up at 5:30 a.m. ready for her breakfast of one raw egg and raw meat.

"She only eats once a day, and her raw feed diet is kind of a new thing for her," Juliana explains. "She had issues after daycare for a while that resulted in her limping a bit. We switched to raw feed once a day, and

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FEATURE

her issues have gone away.” Juliana gets Olivia’s food from Patty’s Pampered Pets in Prole where Olivia also enjoys getting groomed and boarded and gets to see her doggie boyfriend.

“Patty, Kim and their staff do everything for us,” Juliana shares. “With short hair, Olivia doesn’t have to get haircuts very often, but she sheds what we lovingly call ‘Dalmatian glitter’ all over the house, so she gets cleaned up there. She also gets her nails trimmed regularly. Occasionally, she will tolerate me painting her nails, but I don’t think she loves it.”

Olivia sleeps with Juliana and her husband each night and rules the bed. She helps “tuck” the kids into bed and participates in story time, then she stays with them for a while before getting back in Juliana’s bed. She also enjoys going to Juliana’s parents’ acreage outside of Norwalk to run, play and swim. When Juliana works from home, Olivia protects the house and barks when packages get delivered. When she’s not doing that, she plays with her favorite toys. She plays housekeeper by cleaning up scraps that get dropped on the floor. Olivia lounges in her favorite spots on the living room couch each day, in the sunshine next to open doors, and

is sometimes found in Juliana’s reading chair. Especially on weekends, she enjoys long walks with her family.

From visiting Norwalk Public Library’s mascot, Scribbles, at their fundraiser to walking in the Fourth of July parade, Olivia makes plenty of public appearances. Juliana’s favorite activities, though, are taking her best furry friend along on car rides and swimming.

“Olivia may be just a dog, but, to us, she is a part of our family. She has been my best friend since the day I got her, and she has supported me through all moments of life. It will be a hard day for us when she crosses the rainbow bridge.”

Julie Slack

Julie Slack has only had two cats in her life, and Muffin is the second. The first one lived about 19 years, and Julie hopes her current kitty has the same kind of longevity. Muffin is 8 years old. When Julie first adopted her, she was as tiny as a cell phone.

“She was probably too young to leave her mother, having just gotten litter trained and barely begun on cat food,” Julie admits. “I got



Julie Slack and daughter, Bella, adore their cat, Muffin.

my first cat when he was a year old. Muffin was so small that she was just like a baby to me.”

In a loving response to the care Julie provides her, Muffin waits to greet her when she arrives home from work.

In the mornings, Muffin is up at 6 a.m., ready for breakfast. She enjoys a steady diet of both wet and dry cat food, but her dry food is not your average kitty fare.

“Muffin’s dry food is a specialty prescription cat food,” Julie shares. “At 2 or 3 years old, she developed crystals in her urine, generating her need for a special digestive tract food for her issues.”

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FEATURE

Julie says Muffin is a funny cat because she will pass up boiled chicken pieces for the fake, junky chicken-flavored cat food. Julie realized that Muffin was getting to where the water in her bowl wasn't good enough for her tastes. She would hop up to the bathroom sink and want a drink there, so Julie bought her a cat fountain, which Muffin seems pleased with.

Muffin has several special items around their house.

"My daughter, Bella, laughs at me, but Muffin has her own little stroller," Julie chuckles. "She doesn't really like it to be mobile but loves to lie in it on my patio. I also have a pop-up pet tent for her on the patio. It's one of my favorite places to spend time with her."

When the weather isn't ideal, Julie will open the pet tent in her living room and throw wadded-up paper for Muffin to bat around. She also has a basket full of cat toys to play with.

"She has a pink, fuzzy snake we call 'Snaky' that she loves," Julie says. "Like an outdoor cat brings small creatures home to their owners, Muffin will carry Snaky around and drop it at my feet or on my bed."

A red papasan chair Julie bought for herself has become Muffin's chair. Muffin has cat towers in the living room and bedroom and a big, fluffy cat bed in the walk-in closet. Two small cat scratchers grace their living room, and one big one is in the bedroom, but Muffin shows "cat-itude" and still tries to scratch on the side of Julie's couch.

"I cannot trim her claws, though Bella and I have tried," Julie admits. "She screams like we're murdering her. So, I pay for her to regularly be sedated and have her claws trimmed and her fur brushed out. You know you love your cat when you pay for sedation to trim her claws. She is like my second daughter, my baby, and I love her." ■



Muffin gets the run of the Slack home.

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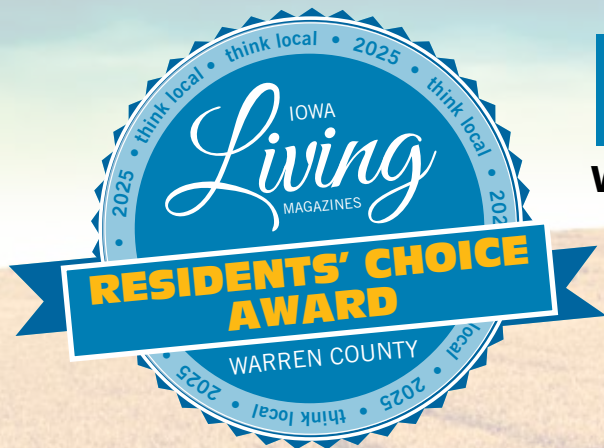


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See rules and vote at www.iowalivingmagazines.com/residentpoll. One vote per resident, please.

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- Restaurant for Breakfast
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- Restaurant for Dinner
- Restaurant for Dessert
- Place for Ice Cream
- Pizza Establishment
- Bar
- Coffee Shop
- Brewery/Distillery/Winery
- Bakery
- Catering Company
- Server/Bartender (First and last name)

AUTO BODY

- Auto Service
- Auto Body Shop
- Car Dealership
- Auto Parts Store

COMMUNITY

- Preschool/Daycare
- School (name of building)
- Park
- Community Festival or Event
- Church
- Pastor
- Chamber of Commerce

SHOPPING

- Grocery Store
- Boutique
- Retail Store
- Florist
- Home Improvement Retail Store
- Appliance Store
- Liquor Store
- Nursery or Garden Center
- Place to Purchase a Gift for a Man
- Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman
- Thrift Store

ENTERTAINMENT

- Dad/Child Date Spot
- Mom/Child Date Spot
- Place to Take Your Mom and Dad
- Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids
- Place for Children's Birthday Parties
- Event Venue
- Golf Course

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- Health Clinic
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LEGAL By Ken Winjum

WHAT IS a case worth?

The value of a given personal injury case is often subject to debate. Insurance companies (who ultimately pay the damages) are notorious for seeking to pay as little as possible in exchange for a closed file.



Often, the representative for the insurance company will try to settle based on medical expenses plus a small amount for "general damages." Some companies are using computer applications to try to objectify what is actually a very individual inquiry.

As a result, persons with an injury claim may find themselves lumped together with others reflected only as a data point in the insurance company's books.

Moreover, many first line adjusters have little authority to make an offer outside a pre-determined range set by the company. Despite what an adjuster might argue, the value of a case is not dependent on what the insurance company wants it to be.

The only way to truly determine the value of a case is by trial to a court or jury under the applicable law. Under Iowa law, the jury is to determine the amount of each element of damages separately.

Typically, the jury may be asked to fill out a verdict similar to what is listed below:

State the amount of damages sustained by the plaintiff caused by defendant's fault as to each of the following items of damages.

If the plaintiff has failed to prove any item of damage, or has failed to prove that any item of damage was caused by defendant's fault, enter a 0 for that item.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Past medical expenses | \$ _____ |
| 2. Future medical expenses | \$ _____ |
| 3. Loss of full mind and body-past | \$ _____ |
| 4. Loss of full mind and body-future | \$ _____ |
| 5. Past pain and suffering | \$ _____ |
| 6. Future pain and suffering | \$ _____ |

There may be lines for additional items of damages. Each item has its own definition under Iowa law. Below are a few definitions of what insurance companies try to call "general damages."

Loss of full mind and body (past). Loss of function of the mind and/or body from the date of the injury to the present time. Loss of mind and/or body is the inability of a particular part of the mind and/or body to function in a normal manner.

Pain and suffering (past). Physical and mental pain and suffering from the date of the injury to the present time. Physical pain and suffering may include, but is not limited to, bodily suffering or discomfort. Mental pain and suffering may include, but is not limited to, mental anguish or loss of enjoyment of life.

Conclusion: Every case is unique. A computer cannot determine a personal injury claim value. ■

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with your independent insurance agent. One of the advantages of using an independent agent is that s/he represents a number of insurers with different products and can assist customers in fitting the right product at the right price for the unique exposures you present. Keep in mind that a lower price often means inferior service and lesser coverage, possibly lesser to a greater degree than the premium decrease. Also, note that this tip deliberately avoids advising you to “shop around” because that implies price comparisons should drive the decision.



reasonably reduce your premium and see if you can meet those standards. A good example is how your auto is rated for use. If you're laid off from work or you've found a job closer to home, you might very well be entitled to a lower premium. Unless you tell your agent about these kinds of changing circumstances, you won't reap the benefits of reduced risk.

4. Question any advice you get, even the advice in this article.

It may not be right for you. Before you make decisions to reduce or eliminate insurance coverages, assess your risks of loss. What are your exposures? What can you lose? What exposures represent losses you cannot afford? What exposures can you retain? The quality of your decisions may be the difference between economic survival and bankruptcy.

2. Consider multiple-policy discounts. This is common advice and generally good advice. Having homeowners, auto and umbrella policies in the same company will likely save money and, perhaps even more importantly, will make it less likely that a coverage gap will show up when more than one insurance company is involved in a claim. Likewise, in business insurance, having general liability and auto coverage in the same insurer using “ISO-standard” or superior forms is often critical.

3. Ask for credits. Too often, consumers are entitled to credits for alarms, extinguishers, good student driving discounts, etc., but the agent is not aware of them. Ask your agent for a list of everything that could

5. If you're going to drop coverages, consider dropping noncritical coverages. Examples include towing and rental reimbursement, credit insurance, etc. Your independent agent can assist you in making these decisions. Consider discontinuing high-risk activities such as using ATVs, jet skis, etc. Catastrophic injuries are common with vehicles of these types. ■

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ME versus me

Norwalk man completes epic journey.

Growing up was not easy in some respects for Norwalk's Michael Howland. High school was a particular sore spot.

"I was bullied. I was always ashamed that I was not good at sports," he admits.

It was a struggle within — especially for a teenager smack dab in the middle of his formative years. Despite the barbs from others, Howland managed to convince himself all was not lost on the athletic front. Deep down, he knew he could do at least one thing: run.

"I could move; I could train myself to persevere and endure," he says.

And, to his credit, he did just that. In 2009, at age 34, despite never having run more than 5 miles at any given time, Howland entered the Chicago Marathon. He finished it, too. Each and every mile.

After that initial Chicago Marathon success, Howland began dreaming of completing marathons in all 50 states. Monetarily, the mountain was as high as the run was long. But Howland, in his persevering way, came up with the idea of singing the National Anthem in each state as well.

"Marathons are not cheap. There is travel and lodging and meals on the go and registrations. Many race directors would either discount or give a comp entry," he says. "But my dad is a veteran, and so were my grandfathers. I love my country, and I found singing the anthem was a beautiful way to honor them."

The race was on. With each marathon, Howland sang the National Anthem there or somewhere near. In every state he was in. Fifteen of the performances were at a ballgame of some sort or a 5K race. Slowly but surely, one by one, each state in the Union was given a checkmark.

Finally, at the Appalachian Series Marathon in Seneca, South Carolina, on March 23, 2025, both races were finished. Fifty states, 50 marathons and 50 National Anthems.

"It all feels so surreal," Howland says of the final race. "I had my siblings there with their families to celebrate. My friend, Jeff Harper, who ran marathon No. 1 with me, was there running marathon 50 with me in a beautiful full circle moment. When I sang that 50th anthem, I had told myself that I would try to emotionally check out so I could get through it, but I couldn't. I got

so emotional so fast."

Understandably so. Reaching the conclusion of his epic journey brought with it a stream of accompanying memories and experiences, which he will cherish forever.

"I am just so grateful to God for all that He has taught me along the way. I have grown in my own faith and personal identity. There have been wonderful people who cared, supported, encouraged and celebrated with me along the way. Their support has been priceless.

"There was initially an element of proving myself to those bullies and also to my own insecure self," Howland says. "But the longer I was on this journey, I learned that I had nothing to prove. I am enough, and my race is me versus me." ■





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NAVIGATING market volatility

On April 2, the Trump Administration announced sweeping tariffs on imported goods that were larger and different than what the markets expected. By the end of the week, the S&P 500 had dropped by 10.5%.

Market volatility continued the following Monday, with prices swinging throughout the day but with the resulting changes ending moderate. Fast forward to Wednesday, April 9, the S&P 500 had its best one-day gain since 2008. Quick market drops can cause anxiety for investors, but it's important not to overreact and risk missing out on the best days of the market.

There are a few certainties when investing: In the near term, it is impossible to consistently predict the direction of the market. You can expect volatility, and risk is unavoidable, but panic is optional.

While any substantial decline can be worrisome for investors, it's important to remember that markets are cyclical. Regardless of the reasons for the downturn, the market has always bounced back. Here are some other considerations that may help provide perspective and support for staying calm when markets are volatile:

After a down year in 2022, the S&P 500 gained 24.23% in 2023 and 23.31% in 2024, the largest two-year increase since 1998. ⁽¹⁾

Since 1928, the S&P 500 Index has returned an annual average of approximately 10%, but annual returns have varied widely. ⁽²⁾ Over 97 years, there have been 65 positive years, 30 negative years, and two flat years. ⁽³⁾

As we've recently experienced, some of the best days of stock market performance followed some of the worst days. No one can predict market direction, and pulling out of the market due to an emotional reaction can lead to missing gains on the way back up.

By the time this article is published, it is likely that markets have adjusted up or down based on tariff news, company earnings, geopolitical developments, etc. Past performance is not a guarantee of future results, but the clear message in these statistics is that it pays to be patient and stick to your long-term strategy. Having a plan in place and an investment allocation that you can stick to helps investors get through turbulent market environments. ■

For more information, please contact Kourtne Klocko with City State Bank Trust & Investments at 515-981-1400. (1) Marketwatch, December 31st, 2024. (2) Investopedia, December 26th, 2024. (3) www.macrotrends.net, 2025. Not FDIC insured. Not deposits or other obligations of the bank and are not guaranteed by the bank. Are subject to investment risk, including possible loss of principal. City State Bank does not provide tax or legal advice. Each taxpayer should seek independent advice from a tax professional. These materials are based upon publicly available information that may change at any time without notice.



NAVIGATING senior transitions in real estate

When it's time to begin a new chapter in life, the process of transitioning to a new home should be more than a transaction — it should be a guided, supportive experience. That's where a certified Senior Real Estate Specialist (SRES) can make all the difference.

Senior-focused real estate coaching offers more than help with buying or selling a home. It provides comprehensive support throughout the entire transition process. This includes assistance with downsizing, home staging, financial planning, and aging-in-place modifications.

With experience spanning both healthcare and real estate, professionals in this field understand that each move tells a unique story — often one involving multiple generations. Whether you're an older adult considering your next step or a family member helping to guide these important decisions, the right coach brings patience, knowledge and compassion to ensure the journey aligns with your values and goals.

This approach also emphasizes bridging generational needs through tailored housing solutions. From assessing home modifications to evaluating senior living communities and coordinating local resources, senior real estate coaches help navigate both the practical and emotional aspects of relocation. ■



Information provided by Vonnie Potter, SRES, MA "Advocating Smart Home Choices for Our Community," 515-710-3722, www.vonniepotters.com, www.vonnie@iowarealty.com, Iowa Realty, 200 Army Post Road, Suite 60, Des Moines, Iowa 50315.

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- Planning a 5 Year Transition to CCRC
- Decluttering Tips & Strategies

Thursday, May 22
10:00am–11:00am
& 4:00pm–5:00pm

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- Planning a 5 Year Transitions to CCRC
- Decluttering Tips & Strategies

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8 HELPFUL tips to downsize to assisted living

Downsizing for a move to assisted living can feel overwhelming — both emotionally and physically. Whether you're helping a loved one or preparing for your own transition, having a thoughtful approach can ease the process and reduce stress. Here are eight practical tips to help navigate this important life change.



it's OK to ask for help. Reach out to family and friends or consider hiring professional movers who specialize in senior relocations. Their support can reduce the physical and emotional load.

4. Declutter and let go: Use this opportunity to sort belongings into categories: keep, donate, gift or discard. Passing along meaningful heirlooms to family can bring joy and preserve memories. A clean slate can be refreshing in a new space.

5. Know your new space: Before packing, request a layout or dimensions of the new living area. This will help you determine what furniture and belongings will fit best and avoid taking more than the space can handle.

6. Maximize storage: Downsizing means making the most of smaller spaces. Look for furniture with built-in storage, use vertical shelving, and consider under-bed bins or closet organizers to keep things neat and accessible.

7. Make it enjoyable: Try to turn packing into a positive experience. Invite loved ones to

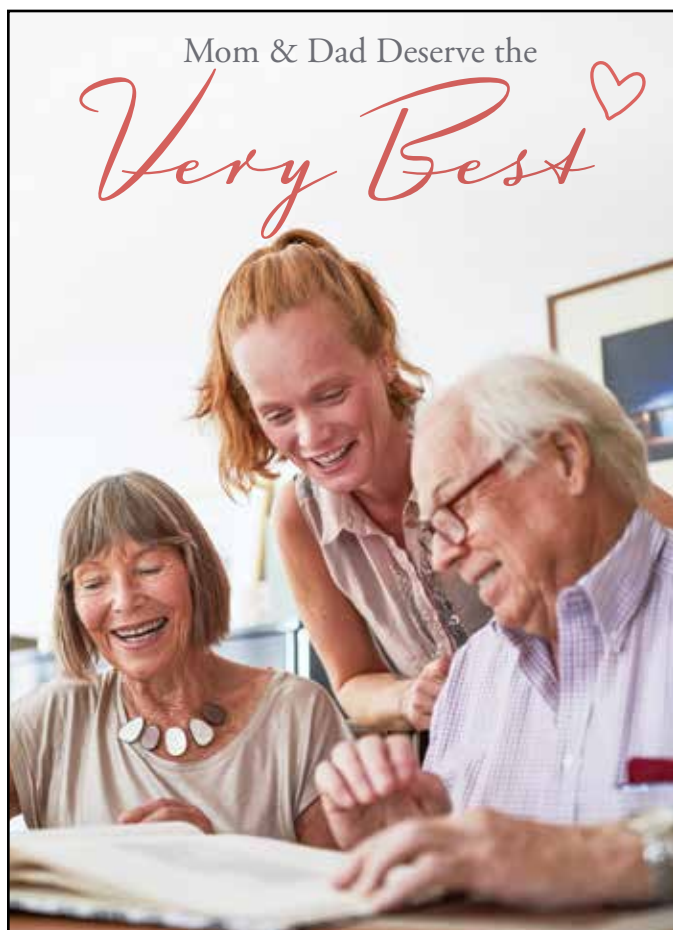
help, play music, and share memories over a meal. Reframing the task can make it feel more like a celebration of new beginnings.

8. Stay positive and patient: Unexpected challenges may arise during the transition. Approach the move with flexibility and an open mind. Staying positive can ease the emotional toll and help focus on the benefits of the new living arrangement.

Final thoughts

Moving into assisted living is a big step, but it doesn't have to be overwhelming. With early preparation, thoughtful organization, and the support of others, the process can be smoother and even meaningful. It's also an opportunity to embrace a new chapter while surrounding yourself with familiar comforts. ■

Information provided by Ashley Bergman, Addington Place of Des Moines, addingtonplaceofdesmoines.com. Written by Discovery Senior Living, 3461 Bonita Bay Blvd., Suite 100, Bonita Springs, FL 34134.



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SETTING the record straight

A very successful businessman once said, “Yes, I am a self-made man — but the blueprints came from my mother.” There’s no doubt a lot of us could make the same honest claim, and we’ll soon have the opportunity to set the record straight.

Sunday, May 11, will mark the 111th anniversary of President Woodrow Wilson signing the measure officially marking the second Sunday of May as Mother’s Day in America. Here’s an interesting side note: Phone companies report that more phone calls are made on Mother’s Day than any other day of the year, spiking up as much as 37%.

While it may have only been an American holiday for a little more than a century now, honoring moms wasn’t President Wilson’s idea. Nor was it Anna Jarvis’ idea, the woman credited with working diligently to see Mother’s Day added to our list of holidays. God said a long time ago “Honor your father and mother...” (Ephesians 6:2). This command is based on one of the Ten Commandments given way back in the book of Exodus. God’s desire has always been that everyone show respect and honor to their parents since they owe a special debt to those parents: They gave them life. So, whether someone likes their parents or even knows who their parents are, there’s an undeniable link that should be recognized and acknowledged toward parents by their children. God says parents deserve to be honored for the special place of authority that He has given to them as givers of life to their children. The bottom line in honoring our parents is that to do so is to honor God and His design for family relationships.

Of course, if your mom has a special place of love in your heart, then you’ll want to pull out all the stops and show your love for her in special ways. Do more than just make a phone call like so many will be doing. Honor her like a hero because that is what she should be to you. Did she make sacrifices for you while you were growing up? Did she set an example of how to live for you? Has she been a source of love and encouragement to you through the years? Then do it up big this year. Honor your mother and let her know how much you appreciate and love her. That would be a great way for all of us to set the record straight and give credit where credit’s due: to our moms. ■

Pastor Rob Jones is the senior pastor of Fellowship Community Church in Norwalk. The church was founded under his leadership in 1995.



May Is Hepatitis Awareness Month

Hepatitis is an inflammation of the liver that can cause health problems, such as liver cancer and liver failure.

Learn the ABCs of this serious virus.

Hepatitis A

- Spread through contaminated food and drink.
- It’s very contagious and you can spread the virus even if you don’t have symptoms.

Hepatitis B

- Spread through contact with an infected person’s blood or other bodily fluids.
- There’s no cure for hepatitis B, but treatment can delay or reduce the risk of developing liver cancer.

Hepatitis C

- There isn’t a vaccine to prevent hepatitis C, but treatment is available.
- Most people with hepatitis C can be cured with just 8–12 weeks of treatment.

Help Protect Your Liver From Hepatitis

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Ask your healthcare provider about hepatitis vaccines and testing.

Source: cdc.gov 4/25

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HEATING & COOLING

By Dale Adams

IT'S HEATING up

HVAC options to lower your utility bill this summer.

The cost of keeping your home or business cool in the summer months is going to be the biggest driver in utility costs. There are some simple steps that will assist in managing those costs. Here are our top 7.



1. The best way to lower your HVAC electricity consumption is to replace an old A/C unit.

These modern devices actually save homeowners in the long run; the monthly drain on electricity is that dramatic. New units are Energy Star certified for conservation, which means they will reduce your electricity usage considerably. If your current air conditioner is more than 10 years old, it's time to think about replacement.

2. Is your main living space and basement nice and cool while all your bedrooms feel like a sauna? A ductless heat pump is the perfect solution. You will increase your comfort, reduce the workload on your existing system(s), and lower your utility bills — all at the same time. Ductless mini split heat pumps can be added to an existing HVAC design easily.

3. Replace your thermostat with a programmable unit. These are smart little tools that let you control the air conditioning when you're not home. Setting a timer on the programmable thermostat will allow you to set the temperature to fit your habits, which means the air conditioning won't have to work as hard or use as much energy.

4. Install ceiling and/or floor fans to circulate the air. Your home will feel cooler, along with helping your air conditioner work a little less hard. During the summer, use your ceiling fan in the counterclockwise direction. The airflow directly underneath the ceiling fan should push down, creating a wind-chill effect, which is going to make you feel cool.

5. Replace your air filters. It's such a simple chore, but the return is outstanding. A clean filter improves the functioning of your HVAC unit, causing it to use less electricity. It's an easy, low-cost way to lessen your monthly electricity usage.

6. Keep your HVAC fan on "auto," rather than regulating the fan speed yourself, can actually save you money on your air conditioning bill. Why? When it's set to auto, your fan is programmed to run at the lowest speed and for the least amount of time possible.

7. An air conditioner won't run as efficiently if it's being blocked in some way. Therefore, when you remove unwanted debris or tall grass that could be obstructing the flow of air surrounding your unit, you are ensuring that the performance of your air conditioning isn't compromised and therefore costing you more. ■

If you have questions, or just simply want to speak to the experts about this or other comfort concerns, give us a call. An HVAC expert answers/returns every call, and our expert advice is always free. 515-868-2779 Ext 1 or Dale@TripleAHomeServices.com.

MEET Betsy Fraser

Showing second graders learning is fun

Originally from Urbandale, Betsy Fraser moved to Norwalk with her husband after they were married in 2017. She taught first grade in West Des Moines for nine years before switching to the Norwalk Community School District this school year. Fraser wanted to be on the same schedule and in the same district where her three daughters will attend school. She also wanted to be more involved in her community.

"I made the switch to Norwalk this year and have been loving my first year here,"

Fraser says. "I feel very supported by the families, administration, PTO, etc. Norwalk has some pretty amazing people here."

After teaching first grade for nine years, Fraser says it has been fun to teach the next grade up and witness the continuation of learning. She chose to pursue a career as a second-grade educator because her favorite teacher was her second-grade teacher. When she was young, she wanted to be just like her.

"She made learning fun and memorable, and I will always remember how caring and genuine she was toward her students. I strive to be like her in that way," Fraser says.

This year, Fraser's students participated in a March Book Madness tournament. For this tournament, her class had a bracket and voted on their favorite books each day to see which book would win the "Book of the Year."

Fraser's students read the books in the tournament, shared book reviews in a discussion group, and then voted for their favorites each day before going home. Fraser says they were excited to return to school the following day to see which book was "advancing" to the next round.

"The best reward is seeing students meet their goals. I love to work on goal setting with my students then celebrating their wins with them when they meet their goals. My students are so hardworking and are very deserving of each celebration," Fraser says.

During the remainder of the school year, Fraser is looking forward to nicer weather so her students can get outside and play. She is also looking forward to enjoying their time together as a class as the school year begins to wind down. ■



Betsy Fraser joined the Norwalk schools because she wanted to work in the district where her kids would go to school and where her family lives.



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MAYOR'S MOMENT

Across the nation, May has become a month of recognition where many mayors sign declarations and proclamations highlighting the dedicated individuals who work hard for the citizens of their communities.

Here in Norwalk, we proudly recognize and celebrate all public employees who live and work among us. Whether serving at the city, county, state, or federal level, these individuals play a vital role in supporting and improving our community every day.

Public Service Week - May 4–10 Public Service Week (PSW) is an annual event held the first full week of May to honor the dedication and contributions of government employees at all levels. It's a time to appreciate the vital work they do in federal, state, county, and local governments. PSW provides an opportunity to educate the public about the importance of public service and the impact of public servants on their lives.

Municipal Clerks Week - May 4–10 Starting May 4, 2025, we will recognize and celebrate the 56th Annual Professional Municipal Clerks Week. Initiated in 1969 by IIMC and endorsed by all of its members throughout the United States, Canada and 15 other countries, the week is a time of celebration and reflection on the importance of the Clerk's office. In 1984, President Ronald Reagan signed a proclamation that officially declared Municipal Clerks Week the first full week of May. In 1994 and 1996, President Bill Clinton also signed proclamations confirming Municipal Clerks Week.

National Police Week - May 11–17 Wednesday, May 14, is Peace Officers Memorial Day, a time to honor the brave men and women who dedicate their lives to keeping our communities safe. Here in Norwalk, we are grateful for the outstanding service of our Police Department. Our officers work tirelessly and train rigorously to ensure the safety of our residents and the protection of our property.

Economic Development Week - May 12–16 We celebrate Economic Development Week each year to highlight the programs, best practices, and exceptional individuals that positively impact life in their communities. In just a few years #EconDevWeek has become one of the most widely recognized events of its kind, validating the often unheralded work of the profession and generating hours of media coverage along with thousands of social media impressions.

National EMS Week - May 18–24 In 1973, President Gerald Ford authorized EMS Week to celebrate EMS, its practitioners and the important work they do in responding to medical emergencies. Fast forward four decades and the dedicated team that make up Norwalk's Fire Department deserve to be recognized for the fantastic job they do. These talented men and women also rigorously train to fulfill their mission to excel in preparedness and the delivery of emergency services.

National Public Works Week - May 18–24

From providing clean water and building roads and bridges, to removing snow on roadways and planning emergency responses for natural or manmade disasters, public works services play a vital role in shaping a community's quality of life. Here in Norwalk, our public works employees work hard every day to provide essential services that make traveling through and living in our city easier and more enjoyable. The next time you see them out and about, give them a wave and a heartfelt thank you for all they do.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this article, May has become a time to recognize many of our City service departments. While it's wonderful to have a designated month or week to celebrate them, the truth is, they deserve our gratitude all year long. Norwalk is fortunate to have a dedicated team of individuals who work tirelessly to make our city a great place to live, work, and play.

School Year Winds Down.

As we begin to wrap up the school year, June 2 to be exact, I'd like to remind everyone to keep an eye out for kids playing in their front yards and out riding their bikes. As we all know, kids can change direction quickly and we need to be alert and cautious.

Have a happy and safe Memorial Day holiday.
Mayor Tom Phillips



Tom Phillips, Mayor

CSB Norwalk Fieldhouse Day Passes

Day passes and Toddler Time passes are NOW available for online purchase for our facilities. You can pre-purchase your passes to get through the line faster or purchase a pass for your child and not have to send a credit card with them.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT!

Nate Spurr, Fire Department



We're turning up the heat in this month's Employee Spotlight with one of our hometown heroes! Meet Nate Spurr, a full-time Firefighter/EMT whose journey with the City of Norwalk began back when he was just 15 years old. From his early days working part-time for the City to serving on the front lines of public safety, Nate has truly grown up with Norwalk—and now gives back to the community he's always called home.

After graduating from Norwalk High School, Nate earned a degree in Industrial Technology from Iowa State University (Go Cyclones!), followed by EMT training at DMACC and Fire I and II certifications. His fire service journey officially ignited as an intern in April 2023, leading to a part-time role in August, and by October 2023, he joined the team full-time!

What drives him? The thrill of the unknown, the physical challenges, and the chance to help neighbors and friends when they need it most. For Nate, the most rewarding part of the job is simply being there for the people he's grown up with.

When he's not racing to the next emergency, you'll find him enjoying the great outdoors—hunting, fishing, camping—or spending quality time with his amazing wife and their two dogs.

And here's a fun fact: You may not know it, but this guy has been working for the City off and on since he was a teenager! Talk about dedication!

Thank you, Nate, for your passion, service, and commitment to making Norwalk a safer place to live and work!

city of norwalk newsletter

MAY 2025

City of Norwalk, Iowa - City Hall X @NorwalkCH @NorwalkIACityHall

Medical Center Announces Plans for New Facility

The City of Norwalk in conjunction with DMOS Orthopaedic Centers is thrilled to announce a new facility to be built in Norwalk this year.

Plans are underway at HWY 28 and Turnberry Drive for a 12,000 SF facility to begin construction in the spring or summer of 2025, with an opening date planned for the spring of 2026.



Read the full release here.

Nutrismoothie & Cafe and Sports Nutrition Affiliates Announce Grand Opening

The City of Norwalk, in conjunction with NutriSmoothie & Cafe, and Sports Nutrition Affiliates are thrilled to announce the official grand opening event on June 28, 2025.

The newly constructed facility in Norwalk Central will consist of 7,750 SF including the cafe, walk-up/takeout window, and supplements store. The building is located at 1601 Chatham Avenue.



Read the full release here.

Keep the Storm Drains Clean

Leaves, grass, or other yard debris should never be blown or placed in the street, or near storm drains, ditches, or waterways. This could clog storm sewers or culverts and cause flooding! It is against City Code to place yard waste of any kind in the street.

Please help by doing the following:

Bag or mulch your yard waste to keep our storm sewer clean and unobstructed

- Learn more about yard waste disposal by visiting WhereItShouldGo.com
- Don't blow grass or leaves into the street; if it happens clean up when finished

- Limit lawn chemicals
- Pick up pet waste
- Help clean storm drain in your neighborhood to reduce the chances of flooding



If you have a storm drain in your neighborhood that ever looks like this, take the initiative, and clean it off. You will help yourself and all your neighbors!



Battery & Small Rechargeable Electronics Drop-Off Now Available in Norwalk

Safely dispose of household batteries and small rechargeable electronics at our new battery drop-off container located at the Norwalk Easter Public Library.

What's Accepted?

- ✓ Household batteries (AA, AAA, C, D, 9V, button batteries)
- ✓ Batteries from power tools
- ✓ Small rechargeable electronics like laptops, tablets, and cell phones

Simply place each battery in a provided bag inside the drop-off container and insert it into the labeled slot!

For additional disposal options, including houseside collection and hazardous waste drop-off locations, visit www.WhereItShouldGo.com/Batteries

Junk in the Trunk Fundraiser

Friday, May 9 & Saturday, May 10 from 8 am-2 pm at the Old Fareway Parking Lot, 1711 Sunset Dr.

Have a garage sale right from the trunk of your vehicle! Reserve your space or just \$20 for both days at givebuyer.com/junkor or visit the library's front desk. Your fee goes to support future library initiatives, and you keep your garage sale earnings!

Caturday with Whiskers TNR

Saturday, May 10 from 10am-Noon

Visit with adoptable cats & kittens at the library! On-site adoptions are not available, but enjoy a meet & greet session. Whisker TNR volunteers will answer your questions about adoptions and the TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) program.

Summer Reading Kickoff Party

Saturday, May 31 from 10am-1 pm

Level Up this summer at your library! Let's celebrate the start of summer. Free family fun including bounce houses, foam machine, a craft, food trucks, and more. Pick up your summer reading challenge materials for all ages to earn prizes & drawing entries just for reading. Thanks to Metronet for sponsoring today's activities.

IMPORTANT LINKS FOR NORWALK!

Aquatic Center Playbook



2025 Summer Playbook



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{YEL!} Video Game Design

July 14-17 | 9am-12pm



Summer Adult Fitness Programs



Art in the Park

Registration Open!
K-6 grade meet once a month June-August!



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CALLED to serve

Messer's mission is to help others.

Randy Messer firmly believes that helping others in need is something everyone is meant to do.

"I have found that volunteering blesses you way more than you bless others," he says. "We are called to do what we can to help in the areas we are able to do so."

In Messer's life, that calling shows up in many ways. He's heavily involved at Crossroads Church as a greeter, a member of both the security and prayer teams, a small group leader and more.

He's also active with the Norwalk Area Ministerial Association, helping deliver food to the Good Life Care Center. During each food pantry event at Norwalk Christian Church, Messer and Doran Pruisner deliver boxes of food to residents who have signed up for pantry goods.

"It's an honor to help those who need assistance," Messer says. "Working with the staff and volunteers at the Norwalk Christian Church is amazing. So many good folks there who work so very hard to get the food pantry materials set up and then to help all who attend with gathering and getting food to their vehicles. These folks are incredible."

Messer is also a longtime volunteer with Royal Family Kids, a national organization whose mission is to serve foster children ages 6-12.



Jason Siemens of Edward Jones presents the Good Neighbor certificate to Randy Messer.

The centerpiece of their work is a week-long summer camp designed entirely around showing love, care, encouragement and support.

"I get to serve as the archery coach, a fishing coach, and I'm one of several camp photographers who take photos of all the activities during the week, so each student gets to have a memory book to show the amazing week they had at camp," Messer explains. "I've watched children who have never fished before catch a fish, and you cannot imagine their excitement when they land that first one."

In addition, Messer serves on the Lake Recreational District Board for Lakewood, a group of volunteers who help maintain Lake Colchester for the community.

For Messer, using his talents and time to bless others brings joy. And he believes the time commitment is small compared to the impact.

"Recently, while delivering food to Good Life, I had an elderly lady tear up and say, 'When I was able to, I did these same sorts of things for my community. But now, I'm not able to any longer, and how I wish I still could,'" Messer shares. "That left an impact as I listened to her speak."

He encourages others to give back as well.

"You are needed," Messer says. "Statistics say one in five Iowa children are underfed. Food pantries are huge in helping feed those in need. We are all gifted to do something. Find what that is and go and do it. You will be blessed beyond what you can imagine." ■



As a Royal Family Kids volunteer, Randy Messer coaches kids in topics such as archery at summer camp.

Edward Jones

> edwardjones.com | Member SIPC



Norwalk: We're here – ready to navigate this market volatility together.



Jason Siemens, AAMS™
Financial Advisor
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Norwalk, IA 50211
515-981-1117

MKT-58940-A-A1 AECSPAD 24997808

THE SWEET life

Cramers find home in Norwalk.

In just a few short years, Sheila Cramer and her husband, Reynolds, have made their mark on Norwalk.

Cramer is the owner of Benny's Beans coffee trailer, an owner and investor in the new Mulletts restaurant, a member of New Life Lutheran Church, and the incoming president of the Norwalk Rotary. She also served on a feasibility committee for the new Norwalk Easter Public Library and supports the Women of Norwalk group.

The Cramers, along with their 7-year-old son, Benny, moved to Norwalk in 2022 for many reasons. Friends had praised the community, and they wanted to be closer to Des Moines Christian School, where Benny attends. Reynolds travels often for work, and Norwalk's proximity to the airport made it a convenient home base.

The family previously lived in Ames, where they had built a traditional-style home full of rich woodwork.

"We originally thought that was our forever home, but life had other plans," Cramer explains. "So, in our home search, we were looking for a

home with a similar feel. When we found our home in Norwalk, we just fell in love with it."

As for favorite parts of their home, Benny would "100% say the pool."

"For me, I love the balcony off the primary bedroom," Cramer says. "It's so peaceful to sit out there at night and listen to the rain or the sounds of the waterfall."

Cramer feels grateful for their warm and welcoming neighborhood, with many empty nesters who are "so sweet to our son."

"Our neighborhood is so much fun at Halloween because everyone cruises around on their golf carts," she adds. "It's like a big neighborhood party. The 4th of July is great, too, watching the fireworks in Des Moines and Norwalk from the golf course. Thursday nights in the summer, families gather at the country club so all the kids can play together outside. It's so family friendly."

She also likes that Norwalk maintains a small-town sense of community.

"We are close to everything, but we have the benefit of still being a small, safe little



Sheila and Reynolds Cramer, along with son, Benny, have found many benefits to living in Norwalk.

town," Cramer says. "The local churches and the Norwalk Ministerial Association do so many great things, like free lunch in the park for our community. Our library also has fantastic programming for all ages. Our son has loved playing soccer, flag football and basketball with the parks and rec program, and we have enjoyed coaching those programs as well."

"We are so lucky to have so many options so close to us," Cramer says. ■

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Upcoming in Norwalk Living magazine:

Yards: Enjoying the green spaces around your home: Do you have a lush, green lawn with plenty of open spaces? Tell us how you keep your yard healthy and how your family makes the best of the space. Perhaps your yard provides space for barbecues, fun around the pool or hot tub, room for play equipment and lawn games. Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com with your experiences enjoying the cool feeling of grass beneath your feet.

Middlebrook Mercantile Events

Middlebrook Mercantile, 4125 Cumming Ave., Cumming

- **May 9:** Live Music: Silversonic, 6-9 p.m.
- **May 11:** Mother's Day Brunch and Blooms, 10-11 a.m.
- **May 15:** Trivia, 6-9 p.m.
- **May 16:** Live Music: Zachary Freedom, 6-9 p.m.
- **May 17:** Live Music: Jeff Banks Band, 5-8 p.m.
- **May 18:** Live Music: Other Brothers and Mercantile Anniversary Party, 2-5 p.m.
- **May 25:** Live Music: Dan Jones and Friends, 2-5 p.m.
- **May 29:** Trivia: 6-9 p.m.
- **May 31:** Live Music: Bob Dorr and The Blue Two, 5-8 p.m.

Contra Dances and Storytelling

Saturday, May 17

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

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

Coffee and Camaraderie

First Tuesdays of the month, 10 a.m. to noon
Norwalk United Methodist Church, 1100 Gordon Ave.

All veterans and service members are invited for a morning of coffee and camaraderie, a morning of connection and community. Whether you're a veteran, active-duty member, spouse or caregiver, everyone is welcome. Enjoy coffee and come together to form new friendships and share stories and experiences.

Norwalk Easter Public Library Events

Various dates

Norwalk Easter Public Library, 1051 North Ave., Norwalk

- **Caturday. Saturday, May 10, 10 a.m. to noon.** Visit with adoptable cats and kittens at the library. On-site adoptions are not available, but enjoy a meet and greet session. Whiskers TNR volunteers will answer your questions about adoptions and the Trap-Neuter-Return program.
- **Bilingual Storytime. Saturdays, May 10 and May 24, 10:30-11:15 a.m.** Enjoy exciting stories, songs and activities at this bilingual storytime in Spanish and English. Recommended for children 5 and younger and their caregivers.
- **Forever Fit. Mondays and Wednesdays, 9-10 a.m. and 10-11 a.m.** Forever Fit is a video-led adult fitness series, offering a rotation of strength training, stretching and occasional guest presenters. No registration required. Attendees should dress comfortably and bring water; everything else is provided.
- **Maker Wednesday. Wednesdays, May 14, 21 and 28, 2-3:30 p.m.** Get creative with weekly activities for kids focused on making, building and creativity. No registration required, just stop by anytime. Recommended for ages 5-11, held on Wednesdays when Norwalk Schools are in session and releasing early.
- **Get Lit Book Club: "Distant Sons," Tuesday, May 20, 6:30-8 p.m.** All readers are welcome for open discussion of "Distant Sons" by Tim Johnston, the 2025 All Iowa Reads - Adult selection. Copies of the book are available for checkout at the front desk.
- **Summer Kickoff Party. Saturday, May 31, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.** Celebrate the start of summer at the library. Free family fun includes bounce houses, foam machine, a craft and more. Be sure to pick up your summer reading challenge materials for all ages to earn prizes and drawing entries just for reading.



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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Check for cancellations



Mother's Day Tea Party

Saturday, May 10,
10 a.m. to noon

Edencrest at Riverwoods,
2210 E. Park Ave., Des Moines

The public is invited for an afternoon filled with love, laughter and appreciation in celebration of the women who've shaped our lives. This Mother's Day Tea Party is a time to slow down, savor sweet treats, sip on fragrant teas, and create cherished memories. Enjoy a variety of aromatic teas and fresh pastries, live soft music and engaging conversation — a celebration of moms, grandmas and mother figures.

Container Gardening Class for grades K-12

Tuesday, May 20, 6-7:30 p.m.

Warren County ISU Extension and Outreach,
200 W. Second Ave.

The Ackworth Garden Club is offering a container gardening class for all Warren County youth in grades K-12. At this free class, participants will learn about selecting plants, pots, maintenance of plants and grooming entries for the Warren County Fair. The class includes hands-on experience in preparing soil, selecting a plant and potting it to take home. Register no later than Friday, May 16, on the Ackworth Garden Club website, <https://ackworthgardenclub.blogspot.com>.

The Lady Birds to perform

Tuesday, May 20

Luana Savings Bank, 9321 Market Place Drive,
Norwalk

The Norwalk Women's Connection will have special guests. The Lady Birds, an Iowa group of choreographed singers, will join the women for a singing presentation during the feature portion of the program. Most of their repertoire is composed of songs made famous by the legendary Andrews Sisters. Doors open at 6:15 p.m. for the buffet, and all women 14 and older are invited to attend. Cost is \$16 per person and registration is encouraged at Lgray@toast2.net or text Mary Lou at 515-360-4926.

Backroads and Byways Junkin' Tour

June 6-7, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Warren County businesses
from Norwalk to Lacona

This bi-annual event has been supporting small businesses in the western and southern portion of Warren County since 2016. This year, the tour jumps to the bordering Madison County, but not far, so you can enjoy more small-town hospitality and great shopping, eating and engaging fun. A combination of vintage, antiques shops, agri-tourism, boutique farms and specialty boutiques are featured with stops in Cumming, Norwalk, Prole, St. Mary's, St. Charles, Indianola and New Virginia. The event will be held again the first Friday and Saturday in October. For participating businesses, visit www.bbjour.com. ■



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SUMMER SCHEDULE 2025

VARSITY BASEBALL

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
May 14	5:30 PM	Away vs. Carlisle	Carlisle High School
May 19	5:00 PM	Away vs. Urbandale	Urbandale High School - Barton Field
May 21	7:00 PM	Boone	Norwalk High School
May 24	10:00 AM	Away vs. Waukee	Waukee High School
May 24	12:00 PM	Away vs. Multiple Schools	Waukee High School
May 28	5:00 PM	Newton	Norwalk High School
May 29	7:00 PM	Away vs. North Polk	North Polk High School
May 30	7:00 PM	Gilbert	Norwalk High School
Jun 2	5:00 PM	Away vs. Pella Christian	Pella Christian High School
Jun 3	7:00 PM	Grinnell	Norwalk High School
Jun 4	7:00 PM	Pella	Norwalk High School
Jun 6	5:00 PM	Away vs. Oskaloosa	Oskaloosa HS Baseball/Softball Fields
Jun 9	7:00 PM	Away vs. Indianola	Indianola High School
Jun 11	5:00 PM	Dallas Center - Grimes	Norwalk High School
Jun 13	7:00 PM	Away vs. Newton	Newton HA Lynn Stadium
Jun 16	5:00 PM	Bondurant-Farrar	Norwalk High School
Jun 18	7:00 PM	Pella Christian	Norwalk High School
Jun 19	7:00 PM	Away vs. Winterset	Winterset High School
Jun 20	5:00 PM	Away vs. Pella	Pella High School
Jun 23	7:00 PM	Oskaloosa	Norwalk High School
Jun 25	5:00 PM	Indianola	Norwalk High School
Jun 27	7:00 PM	Away vs. Dallas Center - Grimes	Dallas Center Grimes Baseball Field
Jun 30	7:00 PM	Away vs. Ankeny Centennial	Ankeny Centennial High School
Jul 1	3:30 PM	Away vs. Des Moines Roosevelt	Des Moines Roosevelt High School
Jul 3	12:00 PM	Away vs. Ballard	Away vs. Ballard
Jul 8	7:00 PM	Carlisle	Norwalk High School
Jul 11	7:00 PM	Away vs. TBA	TBA
Jul 14	7:00 PM	Away vs. TBA	TBA
Jul 16	7:00 PM	Away vs. TBA	Mercy Field at Lewis & Clark Park
Jul 21	TBD	Away vs. IHSAA	Mercy Field at Lewis & Clark Park

VARSITY SOFTBALL

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
May 27	7:30 PM	Ankeny Centennial	Norwalk High School
May 28	5:30 PM	Newton	Norwalk High School
May 29	7:00 PM	Southeast Polk	Norwalk High School
Jun 2	5:30 PM	Away vs. Pella Christian	Pella Christian High School
Jun 3	7:00 PM	Adel DeSoto Minburn CSD	Norwalk High School
Jun 4	7:00 PM	Pella	Norwalk High School
Jun 6	5:30 PM	Away vs. Oskaloosa	Oskaloosa High School
Jun 7	TBD	Away vs. WDM Valley	TBA
Jun 9	7:00 PM	Away vs. Indianola	Indianola High School
Jun 11	5:30 PM	Dallas Center - Grimes	Norwalk High School
Jun 13	7:00 PM	Away vs. Newton	Newton HA Lynn Stadium
Jun 14	TBD	Away vs. Xavier	Xavier High School
Jun 16	7:00 PM	Bondurant-Farrar	Norwalk High School
Jun 17	3:00 PM	Away vs. Davenport Central	Davenport Central High School
Jun 18	7:00 PM	Pella Christian	Norwalk High School
Jun 20	5:30 PM	Away vs. Pella	Pella High School
Jun 21	9:15 AM	Away vs. Multiple Schools	Lacey Sports Complex
Jun 23	7:00 PM	Oskaloosa	Norwalk High School
Jun 25	5:30 PM	Indianola	Norwalk High School
Jun 26	7:00 PM	Away vs. Dallas Center - Grimes	Dallas Center-Grimes Softball Field
Jul 1	7:00 PM	Away vs. Winterset	Winterset High School
Jul 2	7:00 PM	Ames	Norwalk High School
Jul 3	TBD	Away vs. Dallas Center - Grimes	Dallas Center-Grimes Softball Field
Jul 5	1:00 PM	Dubuque Wahlert Catholic	Norwalk High School
Jul 7	7:00 PM	Johnston	Norwalk High School
Jul 9	5:00 PM	Away vs. Waukee Northwest	Waukee Northwest High School
Jul 12	7:00 PM	TBA	Norwalk High School
Jul 15	7:00 PM	Away vs. TBA	TBA
Jul 21	TBD	Away vs. IGHSAA	Fort Dodge Harlan Rogers Sports Complex



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WELLNESS By Jen Penisten

PLATELET-derived growth factors

A natural approach to anti-aging

Platelet-derived growth factors (PDGFs) are gaining popularity in the world of aesthetic medicine as a powerful, natural tool for anti-aging. These growth factors are proteins found in our own blood platelets, plant sources, or safe, synthetic sources that play a critical role in healing and tissue regeneration. When used in cosmetic treatments, they help to stimulate types 1, 3 and 6 collagen production, elastin and hyaluronic acid. This improves skin texture and tone and restores a youthful glow.



PDGFs work by signaling cells in the body to begin the repair process. When injected into the skin or applied after microneedling, they promote the growth of new collagen and elastin fibers — two essential proteins that decline with age. This results in firmer, smoother skin with improved tone and elasticity. Common treatment areas include the face, neck, décolletage and even the scalp to support hair restoration. It's a more natural approach to rejuvenation with minimal downtime and an excellent safety profile.

As interest in non-invasive, regenerative treatments continues to rise, PDGFs are at the forefront of science-based skin care. Whether used alone or combined with other procedures like laser resurfacing, microneedling or injecting into areas of volume loss, they offer a promising option for those seeking highly effective, long-lasting results in their anti-aging journey. ■

Information provided by Jen Penisten, MSN, RN, NP-C, CEO/owner, Vivid Life Spa, 1016 Main St., Norwalk, 515-850-7848, www.vividlifespaspa.com.

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HEALTH By Dr. Michael O'Meara

OCULAR migraine

Q: When I was working on my computer, I started having bright, wavy lines in my vision. I couldn't read or focus, and it went away after 30 minutes. What is going on?



A: Based on your description, your symptoms sound consistent with an ocular migraine, also known as a visual migraine. Ocular migraines can cause a variety of visual disturbances, including bright, wavy or zigzag lines, shimmering or flickering lights, or even temporary blind spots. Some individuals describe the sensation as similar to looking through water or a cracked window. These visual symptoms often begin in the peripheral vision and gradually move toward the center. Although the symptoms may appear to affect just one eye, they typically involve both eyes and originate in the visual processing centers of the brain.

Ocular migraine symptoms usually resolve on their own within 20 to 30 minutes and may or may not be followed by a mild, dull headache. However, it's very important to distinguish ocular migraines from more serious eye conditions. For example, sudden and total vision loss in one eye that lasts a few seconds to several minutes may indicate a transient ischemic attack (TIA) or a stroke affecting the eye. This type of vision loss is a medical emergency and should be evaluated by an eye care provider or physician as soon as possible to rule out underlying vascular issues. ■

Information provided by Michael O'Meara, OD of Optometric Associates of Warren County, P.C., 1228 Sunset Drive, Norwalk, 515-981-0224.

HEALTH

By Dr. Maureen Winslow

BOOST your oral care

Electric toothbrushes and Waterpiks offer significant advantages over manual brushing and flossing, especially when it comes to consistency, effectiveness and ease of use. Electric toothbrushes provide steady, rapid brush strokes that remove more plaque and reduce gingivitis more effectively than manual brushes. Their built-in timers and pressure sensors help users brush for the right amount of time without damaging enamel or gums. They're especially helpful for those with limited dexterity, braces or a tendency to brush too hard.



When it comes to cleaning between teeth, traditional string floss is still one of the best tools for removing plaque and debris from tight spaces. However, it can be challenging for some people to use effectively — especially those with braces, implants or sensitive gums.

This is where a Waterpik shines. It uses a pressurized stream of water to clean between teeth and, more importantly, below the gumline — areas traditional floss may miss. It's an excellent adjunct for people with gum disease, orthodontic appliances, or reaching difficult areas.

In short, electric toothbrushes are great for thorough surface cleaning, while traditional floss tackles tight spaces, and Waterpiks enhance gum health. Using all three as part of a daily routine offers the most comprehensive approach to maintaining healthy teeth and gums. ■

Information provided by Dr. Maureen Winslow, Norwalk Family Dentistry, 1101 Chatham Ave., Suite A, Norwalk, 515-256-9000, www.norwalkfamilydentistry.com.

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HEALTH

By Dr. Jesse Stumbaugh

RELIEF from knee pain with shockwave therapy

Knee pain, whether caused by arthritis, tendonitis or injury, can significantly limit mobility and quality of life. As more people seek non-invasive solutions, shockwave therapy has emerged as an effective treatment backed by medical research. This therapy uses high-energy acoustic waves to stimulate tissue repair, reduce inflammation and promote natural healing at the cellular level by enhancing blood flow and breaking down scar tissue.



Recent studies highlight its benefits. A 2021 article in The Journal of Orthopaedic Research reported significant reductions in pain and improved knee function in osteoarthritis patients after just six sessions. Similarly, a 2020 study published in Pain Medicine found that 80% of patients with patellar tendinopathy experienced lasting relief following shockwave therapy.

Unlike surgical interventions, shockwave therapy is non-invasive and requires no downtime, allowing patients to continue their daily activities with minimal disruption. Many individuals notice improvement after a single session, with optimal results typically seen after six to 12 treatments.

Shockwave therapy is offered as part of a comprehensive approach to musculoskeletal health. By addressing the root cause of knee pain rather than just the symptoms, this therapy offers a promising option for those looking to regain mobility and improve their quality of life without the risks associated with surgery. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jesse Stumbaugh, Norwalk Chiropractic, 1300 Sunset Drive, 515-981-9208, www.norwalk-chiropractic.com. Norwalk Chiropractic is a provider with most major insurance companies.

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FITNESS

By Dani McManus

Q: Is consistency key?

A: Short answer is yes. When it comes to achieving your fitness goals, consistency is the most powerful tool in your arsenal. While motivation may come and go, showing up day after day, even when you do not feel like it, creates real, lasting progress. Consistency builds habits. By sticking to a regular workout schedule and making healthier food choices over time, your body begins to adapt. Muscles strengthen, endurance improves, and those small daily decisions compound into major results. Even if progress feels slow, staying consistent ensures that you are always moving forward. It is also key for maintaining momentum. Skipping a day here and there will not ruin your progress, but frequently stopping and restarting makes it harder to see results. Think of fitness like brushing your teeth. It is the regular effort that keeps things in check, not the occasional burst of activity.

Most importantly, consistency builds discipline and confidence. Every time you stick to your plan, you are proving to yourself that you are committed. That kind of mindset shift is just as valuable as any physical transformation.

So, whether you are just starting out or working toward a new milestone, remember, it is not about perfection, it is about persistence. Stay consistent, and the results will come. ■

Information provided by Dani McManus, certified personal trainer/head coach at Anytime Fitness in Norwalk. To submit a question for future articles, contact her at norwalk@anytimefitness.com.



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PLAN AHEAD

By Dave Cortner

WHAT IS a circle of protection?

So many times we deal with families that indicate their loved one had "everything taken care of" only to find out that everything was not taken care of. Maybe the loved one had their cemetery arrangements handled in advance but had never visited with the funeral home. Or, maybe they had talked with a funeral home but never decided on a cemetery.

What we know is that this can leave a family with an unexpected burden and/or unexpected expenses at what can otherwise be a very emotional and stressful time.

Complete arrangements often involve the selection of services and merchandise from two separate entities: the cemetery and the funeral home. A funeral home and cemetery can help you with completing this "circle of protection" so you can protect your family from having to make these decisions when they are grieving.

It truly is the difference between the question, "What would Dad have wanted?" and the confident statement, "This is what Dad wanted." Do your family a favor and start the conversation today. Reach out to your cemetery and funeral home of choice. You will be glad you did, and it will be a gift for your family. ■



Information provided by Dave Cortner, Hamilton's on Westown Parkway, 3601 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-697-3681

CELEBRATE National Speech-Language-Hearing Month with a visit to the audiologist

Along with enjoying nature's soundtrack as we spend more time outdoors, there's another reason to care for your hearing this May. It's been designated as National Speech-Language-Hearing Month, previously



known as Better Hearing and Speech Month. Organized by the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, this month focuses on raising awareness about hearing loss and encouraging people to seek appropriate treatment — particularly the 37.5 million adults who report some trouble hearing.¹

If you're one of them, visiting an audiologist is a good place to start your journey to better hearing. Audiologists play a pivotal role in diagnosing, managing and treating hearing and balance disorders. They use a medical model approach to hearing health care, which

not only ensures that any potential issues you may have are identified early but also opens the door to effective management strategies and treatments that can significantly improve your quality of life. Your local audiologist is here to provide everything from comprehensive hearing evaluations to fitting hearing aids and counseling you and your family.

The consequences of untreated hearing loss

Untreated hearing loss is not just about misunderstanding conversations with friends and loved ones. It's also correlated with several serious physical, mental and emotional health issues, including:

- Cognitive decline
- Depression, anxiety and loneliness
- Increased risk of falls

The good news? Hearing loss treatment can help. Research has found that wearing hearing aids can provide significant benefits, reducing the likelihood of depression, lowering the risk of

falls and improving one's social life. In addition, using hearing aids may help reduce the risk or slow the progression of cognitive decline in some individuals.

Don't put your well-being at risk. Scheduling regular hearing evaluations with an audiologist is a simple yet critical way to ensure optimal hearing health and overall well-being, allowing you to stay connected to the world and savor life's special moments to the fullest.

If you or someone you know could benefit from a hearing consultation, now is the time to act. In honor of National Speech-Language-Hearing Month, prioritize your hearing health this May by reaching out to your local audiologist to request an appointment. ■

Information provided by Dr. Kelly Cook, Audiologist, Iowa Hearing Center, 1228 Sunset Drive, Suite B, Norwalk, 515-416-5990, www.IowaHearingCenter.com. 1. National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders. (2024). Quick statistics about hearing, balance and dizziness. www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/statistics/quick-statistics-hearing#:

MAY IS National Speech- Language-Hearing Month!



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ASIAN ground turkey bowl is healthy and flavorful

When our girls were younger, and we were running from one activity to the next seemingly every night, we treated ourselves, often to Chinese take-out. Shane and the girls loved the sweet sauce on orange chicken. My choice was cashew chicken, and we all devoured the fried rice.

We like Asian food, but it has not been something I cook at home. This recipe caught my eye the other day, so I thought I would test it out. My family loved it!

I appreciate this Asian ground turkey bowl recipe for its perfect balance of flavors and textures. The savory turkey, cooked with garlic, ginger, hoisin sauce and soy sauce, brings a rich base that pairs well with the freshness of crunchy vegetables. It is a healthy yet satisfying dish with lean ground turkey providing a great source of protein.

I also appreciate how customizable it is. You may choose to add a little spice with sriracha or keep it mild. Adjust the flavors to your taste. The rice gives it a comforting feel, while the vibrant toppings — like cucumbers and lettuce — add just the right amount of crunch. It is one of those meals that feels indulgent but is actually good for you with only 366 calories and 32 grams of protein per serving.

Enjoy and let me know what you think. ■



Asian ground turkey bowl

Ingredients

- 2 pounds lean ground turkey
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 red pepper, diced
- 1 green pepper, diced
- 4 green onions, chopped
- 1.5 cups carrots, shredded
- .5 cup water chestnuts, chopped
- 4 teaspoons minced ginger
- 4 teaspoons minced garlic
- 4 tablespoons low sodium soy sauce
- .75 cup hoisin sauce
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons sesame oil
- 4 cups rice (any variety – I use Jasmine)
- 1-2 cups lettuce, finely chopped
- 1-2 cups cucumbers, diced

Directions

- Make sauce by combining hoisin sauce, soy sauce, rice vinegar and sesame oil. Save for later.
- Heat olive oil over medium high heat. Add turkey once hot and brown for 3-5 minutes. Push the



turkey to the sides of the pan. Add red and green bell peppers, green onions, water chestnuts, garlic and ginger. Stir together and cook for 4-7 minutes. Cook until turkey is cooked. The vegetables should be tender-crisp.

- Add sauce and cook 2-3 minutes. Sauce will thicken and coat the turkey and vegetables nicely. Serve turkey and vegetables on top of a bed of rice. Top with lettuce and cucumbers. You can add additional carrots and green onions if desired. Serves eight.

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

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CELEBRATING mom with purpose and preparedness

Mother's Day is a time to honor the incredible women who nurture, support and guide us through life. While there are traditional gifts of appreciation, this special day also offers an ideal moment to reflect on a more lasting gift: financial security and empowerment for moms and families alike.

Whether you're a new mom, a seasoned parent, or an adult child looking to support your mother's well-being, incorporating financial planning into the Mother's Day conversation can have long-term benefits.

Financial planning is about ensuring peace of mind, freedom and the ability to make empowered choices. For moms, especially those managing households, raising children or caring for aging parents, having a clear financial plan is crucial. Life can bring certain assumptions with it. We assume the sun will rise and set as programmed each day; we know that kids will always be curious to a dangerous level; and we assume that mom has her "financial house" in order. Maybe this is a good time to inquire.

Here are a few financial considerations particularly relevant on Mother's Day:

- **Budgeting and saving:** Whether managing the family budget or planning for personal goals, creating a detailed monthly budget can help moms stay on track and feel more in control. Tools like budgeting apps or spreadsheets can make it easier to monitor expenses and allocate funds for savings or emergencies.
 - **Life insurance and estate planning:** While it's not the most glamorous topic, making sure there is a life insurance policy and a will in place is one of the most loving things you can do for your family.
 - **Retirement planning:** Mothers, particularly those who take time out of the workforce to raise children, often fall behind in retirement savings. Mother's Day is a perfect reminder to review IRAs, 401ks or other retirement investments.
 - **Education savings:** For moms saving for their children's future, 529 college savings plans are a popular and tax-efficient way to invest in education. Having a dedicated savings plan reduces the pressure when college bills start to arrive.
 - **Teaching financial literacy:** Moms are often the first financial role models in a child's life. Encouraging smart money habits from a young age: saving allowances, budgeting for a toy or opening a youth savings account can plant the seeds for lifelong financial health.
- If you're in the position to give back to your mother this Mother's Day, consider a financial health check-in. It doesn't have to be intrusive, just a supportive conversation to make sure she's prepared for the future. Helping her organize paperwork, review insurance policies, or connect with a financial advisor can be a meaningful and lasting gesture of love.
- Mother's Day is about showing appreciation, and one of the most powerful ways is by ensuring long-term financial well-being. Whether you're making sure your mom is financially secure or planning your own family's future, taking steps toward a solid financial foundation is a gift that lasts far beyond May.

This year, celebrate with heart...and a little strategy. It's the kind of love that pays dividends. ■

Information provided by Daniel Rundahl, Financial Advisor, Rundahl Financial Consultants, 8230 Hickman Road, Suite 300, Clive, 515-727-1701, drundahl@rundahlfina.com, www.rundahlfina.com.



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SWING into summer at the Annual Golf Outing

Mark your calendars for Monday, June 17, and join us for a day of networking, connection and fun on the fairway. The Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce Golf Outing isn't just a round of golf — it's one of



our most anticipated events of the year, offering a unique opportunity to engage with local professionals in a relaxed, scenic setting. Whether you're a golf pro or just along for the ride, this event welcomes all skill levels and business backgrounds.

A tee-rific networking opportunity

Our annual outing is a signature chamber event, bringing together business leaders, entrepreneurs and community members for a day of collaboration and friendly competition. The scramble format and shotgun start encourage teamwork and lively interaction, making it easy to build meaningful connections while enjoying the great outdoors. It's the ideal mix of business and pleasure — and a fantastic way to kick off the summer season.

EVENT DETAILS

Date: Tuesday, June 17

Location: Legacy Golf Club, 400 Legacy Parkway, Norwalk

Shotgun Start: 9 a.m.

Registration includes 18 holes of golf, cart rental, lunch, post-event reception and a chance to win exciting prizes.

Pricing: \$100 per golfer; \$400 per foursome; \$150 hole sponsorship

Extras: Raffle tickets and Mulligans available for purchase at the check-in table. Lunch is included in the registration fee.

Sponsorship opportunities available

Are you looking for a way to gain exposure for your business? Sponsorship opportunities range from hole sponsorship to premium event partnerships. This is an excellent way to market your business while supporting a well-loved chamber business community event.

- Lunch and Reception Sponsor - \$675 (two available)
- Prize Sponsor - \$500 (one available)
- Foursome + Hole Sponsor - \$540 (20 left)
- Hole Sponsor - \$150 (13 left)

- Longest Drive Sponsor - \$250 (one available)
- Closest to the Pin - \$250 (one available)
- Golfer - \$100

Interested in sponsoring? Email info@norwalkchamber.org for details.

Why you should participate

• **Expand your network:** Connect with fellow business professionals in a casual and engaging environment.

• **Showcase your brand:** Sponsorship opportunities offer excellent visibility for your company.

• **Enjoy a great day of golf:** Take in the beautiful course while competing for prizes and bragging rights.

• **Spots are limited;** this event always sells out for us, so don't wait to secure your place. Gather your team or sign up individually — we'll pair you with a great group to ensure a fun and productive day.

Register at norwalkchamber.org/golf ■

Information provided by Mel Guanci, Executive Director, Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce.

THE NORWALK AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

GOLF OUTING

JUNE 17, 2025

REGISTER AT NORWALKCHAMBER.ORG/GOLF

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OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON Cutting

Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Dunn Industrial Condominiums (the KataLYST Team - Jared Husmann), 1060 Madison St., on April 8.



Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Dunn Industrial Condominiums (the KataLYST Team - Jared Husmann), 1060 Madison St., on April 8.



Mark Miller, Mayor Tom Phillips and Greg Husmann



Lucinda Sperry and James Spooner



Jared Husmann and Amand Reid-Raper



Ryan Husmann and Haley Hoss



Emily McLain and Amanda Reid-Raper



Jared Carlson and Carol Husmann



Keagan Johnson and Dan Carlson



Jon Niemeyer and Tiffany Coleman



Mark Miller and Lucinda Sperry

OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON Cutting

Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Ember Market, 1951 E. 18th St., Suite 107, on April 11.



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Tiffany Lynch and Amanda Reid-Raper



Abbey Clark and Mel Guanci



Jared Carson and Haylee Katschman



Tiffany Lynch and Angie Cooper



Mel Guanci and Chad Stevens



Dan Obley and Jon Niemeyer



Rayni, Jeremy, Tiffany and Rylan Lynch



Janet Kubik, Marcia Swanson, Teresa King, Patty Wadle, Becky Bussanmas and Christy Newbury

TEACHER & STAFF APPRECIATION WEEK | MAY 5-9

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NATIONAL SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION MONTH | MAY 2025



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Brian Rausch



Michelle Kelly



Kate Baldwin



Daniel Doerfler



Thank You!

For Your *Dedication and Leadership* to our
Norwalk Students, Staff, and Community

Graduates, as you are stepping out of one phase into the next, the most important thing for you to know and remember is to rely on God every step of the way and in every phase of your life. If you seek the Lord with all of your heart, you will never lack any good thing! He will truly provide for every need that you have to live a God glorifying life. Congratulations, Class of 2025!

- The People of Fellowship Community Church



"Young lions lack food and go hungry, but those who seek the Lord will not lack any good thing."

Psalm 34:10



JOIN US FOR
Mother's Day
AT FELLOWSHIP

SUNDAY, MAY 11 • 8:30 & 10:30 AM

- Breakfast & Coffee Served Before Services
- Recognition & Prayer for All Mothers
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