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MAY 2025

Living

Pampered Pets

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

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At CopperWood Senior Living, we believe life should be filled with great food, great company and great experiences. In May and June we're hosting a series of special events to bring our community together—whether you're looking to sip and savor, celebrate loved ones or honor our heroes.

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Stars, Stripes and Sizzles A Backyard Bash at CopperWood

Friday, May 23
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Join us for a sizzling summer celebration featuring rustic burgers, grilled hot dogs and festive sides! Sip on bourbon lemonade or Patriot Punch and indulge in firecracker cookies. All of this while you enjoy a full lineup of classic yard games like cornhole, giant Jenga and more!



Burgers and Beer A Celebration of Dads at CopperWood

Friday, June 13
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Join us for a laid-back evening honoring the fathers and father figures in our lives! We're firing up the grill for a classic cookout featuring juicy burgers, cold beer and all the fixings.

Guests can enjoy the summer air with our residents, take part in some friendly yard games and while experiencing the community spirit that makes CopperWood feel like home. Whether you're celebrating a loved one or just love a good burger, we'd love to have you with us!

*Please RSVP at least four days before our events
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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 Ashley Rullestad

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.

Don and Susan Sandor's dog, Winston, has camped in 44 states and has been to 85 park sites including 30 National Parks.

Cat and dog make the perfect pair

Denise Waddingham and her husband, Jamie, welcomed their dog, Sarge, into their home after losing their black lab, Jesse. For them, it was fate.

“Jesse was with me through the lowest and highest parts of my life,” Denise says. “We knew that Jesse would want us to offer the love he had to another fur baby, but we didn’t realize it would happen so quickly.”

Jamie asked Denise if she had ever heard of fox red labs, and she hadn’t. She started looking and found a 9-month-old male online that needed to be rehomed.

“It’s not the typical way I’d rescue, but it was fate,” she says. “We went to visit him, and I said, ‘Get the car ready; he’s coming home with us.’ He went from living in an outdoor kennel with only a bowl of water and food to living the pampered life.”

When they brought Sarge home, they had some tough months as he had no training or socializing prior to becoming part of the family. Through continuous training and lots of cuddles, he is now the “bestest” boy. He hit



Denise and Jamie Waddingham pamper their dog, Sarge, and his brother, Pepper the cat.

the jackpot with his new owners, and they feel the same way. From living alone in an outdoor kennel, to sleeping in the bed, going to doggie daycare, taking car rides for his favorite treat (a pup cup), and lots of love, he’s definitely living the best life.

Denise works from home so, when Sarge isn’t at Wags for Doggy Daycare twice a week, she and Sarge go on five — yes, five — walks a day — in sun, rain, snow, sleet or wind. They

have met wonderful friends through Sarge. He is a celebrity within the neighborhood, at daycare, and at their favorite coffee shop, Ziggies, which even has his picture in the drive-thru window.

On Sarge’s fifth birthday (he is 7 now), Denise and Jamie put out a birthday sign, and the neighborhood kids came to visit. Also, they asked family and friends to stop by to celebrate and bring donations for the Animal Rescue

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They adopted Sarge's little brother, Pepper, from the ARL in 2020. They thought he needed a sibling, and their antics are entertaining. Pepper, the black cat, keeps everyone on their toes.

"The unconditional love they give is a true blessing. I can't imagine our lives without fur babies in them. They complete our family," Denise says.

National Parks pup

Don and Susan Sandor have had dogs throughout their relationship. In fact, they joke that they have had dogs longer than they have had children. Their current canine companion, Winston, has been with them since 2012 when they rescued him from a facility in Osceola.

"We were the third family to take him home because he was very mistrustful of everyone and everything," Susan says. "He probably was mistreated at some point; he is still fearful of being picked up. He spent most of his time in a kennel and didn't know how to play in a backyard."

Winston was 1.5 years old then and coal



Don and Susan Sandor's dog, Winston, has U.S. Bark Rangers tags.

black with white patches. He has since turned gray, along with his owners. They don't know what kind of dog Winston is, but vets have suggested Cairn terrier, schnauzer, Scottie and/or Westie terrier.

After retirement in 2018, the Sandors started traveling with their travel trailer in tow.

"Winston is a great traveler, curled up in the

back seat in his dog bed, waiting to pop up for his window to be opened when we slow down to pull in a camp site," Susan says.

He has camped in 44 states and has been to 85 park sites including 30 National Parks. He climbed Cadillac Mountain in Acadia National Park in Maine, took a pontoon tour of Voyageurs National Park in Minnesota,

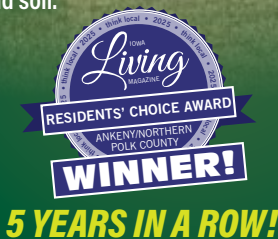
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FEATURE

and watched buffalo walk by the truck at Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. The National Battlefields and National Historical Sites are more dog friendly than most National Parks, but he obeys the rules and stays on the dog-approved trails.

When his owners stop to read the historical markers, Winston enjoys investigating the grass, trees, cannons and whatever else is nearby. When the Sandors are at a busy National Park like Grand Canyon or Yosemite, they have fun keeping track of how many times people tell them what a cute dog Winston is and ask what breed he is.

"Some people ask to take his picture, which we find amusing," Susan says. "Winston has his own chair at the campfire at the end of the day. There are usually lots of other dog friends in the campground, too."

Winston is a proud member of the U.S. Bark Rangers, a ranger program for dogs at many national, state and local parks. He collects the Bark Ranger tags, which the Sandors hang on their Christmas tree. Winston also enjoys rides in his Burley behind Susan's and Don's recumbent trikes.

Pampered pups

Jessica and Jared Matthews both grew up with dogs, but owning their first dogs together is a special bond they are now enjoying. They brought Julep home in August 2021 from AHeinz57 Rescue in De Soto. Pippo joined them in May 2024 from the Story County Animal Shelter in Nevada.

"While they're not spoiled in the traditional, grooming-spa-treatment-every-week and bows-in-their-hair and four-poster-custom-doggy-bed



Jared and Jessica Matthews' dogs, Julep and Pippo, are their fur babies.

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FEATURE

way, we do think they live a pretty fun and full life,” Jessica says. “With no kids, we put all of our parental energy into our dogs and have a lot of fun with it.”

Jessica and Jared enjoy the unique personality quirks the dogs have. For instance, Julep gets sassy when she wants something and doesn’t get it. Pippo will flop over anytime, anywhere, to get his belly rubs. They are also good at communicating what they want and need. Julep will sit in front of the fridge and stare at the top of it because she knows that is where they keep the fun treats.

“We have a weekly ritual of getting coffee in town and pup cups for the dogs,” Jessica says. “We love when the baristas fawn over the dogs and give them love. We also love celebrating holidays with them, like letting them do an Easter egg hunt or letting them unwrap Christmas presents. Fortunately for the pups, we live walking distance from the dog park and are frequent flyers there.”

For the Matthews family, their dogs are a source of positivity and joy.

“To care for and love a dog and be loved in return is such a unique experience,” Jessica says. “They also get us out of the house and exercising more, which is great for all four of us. The physiological and physical benefits of owning a pet are great. We love them so much. They are 100% a part of our family, and we try to give them the best life we can.”



Julep and Pippo enjoy one of their frequent outings.

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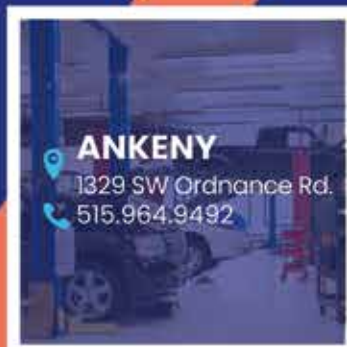
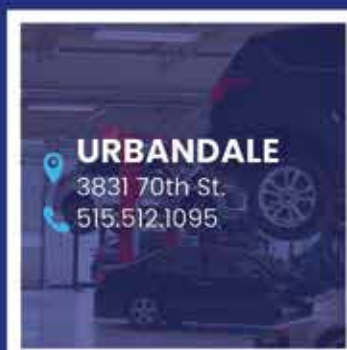


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The furry matriarch

There's just one rule at the Bjerke household in Ankeny with regard to their pet.

Wherever they go, she goes, too.

Michele and Justin Bjerke, along with their children, Madilyn and Monroe, treat their a wirehaired pointing griffon, Ashton Belle Bjerke, as a member of the family.

"Ashton is involved in every aspect of our lives from the moment we wake up to when we fall asleep," Michele says. "She is always front and center of our Christmas card — and family photos as well. Our daughters love and dote on her like she is royalty, giving her treats far too often."

The things we do for love.

Michele, who has been an animal lover for as long as she can remember, grew up with family pets and was around animals in some sort of capacity, whether it be at a friend's house or often visiting pet stores and zoos.

"The unconditional love and gentle nature animals possess is truly unbeatable," she says.

So when she and Justin were engaged, they decided a puppy would make their lives even more exciting. The only decision was which one. Michele preferred larger dogs, and Justin ("a big softy who loves all dogs," she says) wanted a hunting dog. Neither wanted a furry friend that shed much, either. The two eventually found the perfect match in Kansas and brought Ashton home when she was 8 weeks old.

She's been the matriarch ever since — and the source of attention. In more ways than one.

"She underestimates her size and speed occasionally," Michele says. "One time, we were taking family photos outside, and, in the distance,



Ashton Belle Bjerke, a wirehaired pointing griffon owned by Michele and Justin Bjerke of Ankeny, gets plenty of pampering.

there was a very green, very smelly pond with a dock. Ashton decided to get the 'zoomies' mid-photoshoot and ran to the dock."

Ashton tried to slow down, but it was a little too late. She slid off the end into the water. Not being much of a swimmer, she struggled to get out. Justin to the rescue, fine clothes and all.

"Justin had to pull her out in his nice family photo clothes, sopping wet with smelly green slime," Michele laughs. "She continued the family photos and shook her green slime over all of us. The ride home smelled like rotten fish and wet dog, and my daughters still laugh about it. It's hilarious now, but we will never forget it." ■

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NEWS BRIEFS

HERBEL earns CKA designation

Brian Herbel, a financial advisor with Edward Jones in Ankeny, has achieved the Certified Kingdom Advisor®, or CKA®, designation.

The CKA® training program provides instruction according to the Kingdom Advisors' philosophy on how to weave a biblical perspective into financial discussions for individuals interested in doing so. Focus topics include: financial stewardship, tax-sensitive investment strategies, generosity through charitable giving, retirement planning and estate considerations.

In addition to the education and examination components of certification, financial advisors must also commit to the Kingdom Advisors' Code of Ethics. ■

CITY opens 12-court pickleball facility

The City of Ankeny announces the first phase of the Rally Complex is now open. Located at 725 S.W. Prairie Trail Parkway, the Rally Complex features 12 lighted pickleball courts, restrooms, a shelter, two softball fields, batting cages and a parking lot. The pickleball courts, shelter, restrooms and parking lot are now open. The softball fields and batting cages are still under construction and are expected to open later this summer.

"Pickleball is one of the fastest-growing sports in the country, and Ankeny is proud to invest in facilities that bring people together," Nick Lenox, director of Parks and Recreation said. "The Rally Complex meets a growing demand and gives our community a dedicated space to play, compete and connect."

The pickleball courts and restrooms are open daily from sunrise to 10:30 p.m. All courts are on a first-come, first-served basis unless courts are reserved or scheduled activities are taking place. Four pickleball courts can be reserved online.

For more information about the Rally Complex and to reserve a court, visit www.AnkenyIowa.gov/Rally. ■

CITY receives Community Forestry Grant

The city of Ankeny announced it was awarded a \$9,918 grant through the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Community Forestry Grant Program. The funding will support the planting of 42 trees in seven locations across the city this spring.

Parks and Public Works crews are planting a mix of native trees along S.W. State Street, Estates Park, Village Park and the Ankeny Art Center. City crews and volunteers from the Ankeny Art Center kicked off the tree planting.

"This funding will help the city rebuild Ankeny's tree canopy following the widespread damage from the 2020 derecho and the loss of ash trees to the emerald ash borer," City Arborist Mike Stensrud said. "In addition to beautification, the trees will help mitigate stormwater runoff and promote environmental sustainability in our parks and other public spaces."

This is the third time Ankeny has received a Community Forestry Grant, following awards in 2021 and 2024. ■

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

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

Upcoming in Ankeny 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.

Ankeny Arts Festival

Saturday, May 17, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Uptown Ankeny

The Ankeny Art Center and Uptown Ankeny will host the Ankeny Art Center Arts Festival. The festival will transform several streets of Ankeny's Historic Uptown into a vibrant celebration of creativity and artistic expression. It will feature 50-plus fine art vendors, live music, the uptown train, food trucks and activities for kids.

Ankeny Art Center Classes and Workshops

Various dates
The Ankeny Art Center, 1520 S.W. Ordinance Road

Registration is open for summer classes and workshops at the Ankeny Art Center. Summer camps run June 10-13, June 17-20, July 8-11 and July 15-18. Each week will have different projects so campers can sign up for multiple sessions. For more information and to register, visit www.ankenyardcenter.org.

Ankeny Spring Cleanup Days

Saturday, May 17, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, May 18, noon to 4 p.m.

Ankeny Sanitation, 7002 S.E. Delaware Ave.

Held every spring, residents can dispose of large unwanted items free of charge. Residents residing within the corporate limits of Ankeny may participate in this program. Trucks larger than a pickup are prohibited from participating in the disposal of cleanup debris.

The following list of materials and debris are not accepted at the cleanup site: Antifreeze, asphalt, batteries, clothes dryers and washers, computer monitors, dehumidifiers, dishwashers, freezers and refrigerators, furnaces, microwave ovens, oil, ovens and stoves, paint, pesticides, propane and helium tanks, television sets, tree stumps, water heaters and yard debris.

Mill Pond Senior Living 30th Anniversary Open House

Thursday, June 5, 3-6 p.m.
Mill Pond Senior Living, 1201 S.E. Mill Pond Court, Ankeny

Mill Pond Senior Living will be hosting a 30th anniversary open house and invites the Ankeny Community to be part of this special event. A chamber ribbon cutting will also be held.



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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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Check for cancellations

Yoga in the Park

Saturdays, May 24 through Aug. 30,
8-9 a.m.

Wagner Park, 410 W. First St.,
Ankeny

Bring a yoga mat and a friend to enjoy one hour of free outdoor yoga every Saturday morning May 24 through Aug. 30 at Wagner Park. Yoga in the Park is led by a different professional yoga instructor each week. Yoga in the Park is designed for improving community health, energy and relaxation. People of all ages and all skill levels are welcome to attend. Yoga in the Park is sponsored by UnityPoint Health - Des Moines. For more information, including a complete list of instructors, visit www.ankenyiowa.gov/465/Yoga-in-the-Park.



Neighbor to Neighbor Free Meal

May 18, doors open at 4 p.m.,
serving at 5 p.m.
St. Anne's Episcopal Church, 2110
W. First St., Ankeny

This month's meal will feature mac and cheese with ham. No one is required or expected to be a member of St. Anne's. The meals are free and are followed by seven hands of free bingo. There are small prizes for six hands and a \$15 gift card for the last hand. Freewill donations are accepted but not required or expected.

Bankers Trust Ankeny Customer Appreciation Event

Thursday, June 12, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
1925 N. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny

Bankers Trust will thank its customers with a customer appreciation event.

Zoo Bites

Various dates

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 a favorite food: pizza.

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Historical Society Celebrates Ankeny's Sesquicentennial

Tuesday, June 10, 6-8 p.m.

301 S.W. Third St., Ankeny

Ankeny Area Historical Society is celebrating Ankeny's sesquicentennial with a special program. Hear about the coal mining history of the community and visit with local historic figures in costume. Free admission. Have dinner at the pizza truck that will be on site.



Bands, Brews and Bikes

Every Sunday through October, 1-3 p.m.

Water Works Park, 2201 George Flagg Parkway, Des Moines

Bike, family and pet-friendly, Bands, Brews and Bikes returns to the biergarten this summer. Ride your bike, grab a cold brew and enjoy live music.

DMPA Free Outdoor Family Events

Various dates and parks

Des Moines Performing Arts announced the engagements headed to Des Moines as part of its 2025 Free Outdoor Family Events series. These free presentations are designed to engage new audiences and performing arts enthusiasts alike, while also removing the barrier of cost.

- **May 2-26:** OPTIK, Cowles Commons
- **June 14-17:** Bindlestiff Family Circus, parks across the metro
- **July 21-22:** Dupont Brass, parks across the metro
- **June 11, July 9, Aug. 13:** Storytime Under the Green Umbrella, Cowles Commons
- **June 21, July 12, Aug. 23:** Dancing on Cowles Commons

For more information including times and park locations, visit www.desmoinesperformingarts.org/whats-on/series/free-outdoor-family-events.




'Light Within Ourselves: Haitian Art in Iowa'

Through Sunday, Sept. 7

Des Moines Art Center, A.H. Blank Gallery, 4700 Grand Ave., Des Moines

This exhibition explores the vibrant diversity of Haitian artwork, featuring paintings, metalwork, sculpture and drapery (beaded and sequined banners). The exhibition is accompanied by a complimentary 16-page gallery guide, featuring colorful artworks, a history of the WCA's Haitian art collection, and a description of the themes and symbols often depicted in Haitian artwork. The gallery guide has been translated into Haitian Kreyòl, the first language of nearly 11 million people worldwide.



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'Alice in Wonderland'

Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, May 2-18.

Fridays 7 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays 1 p.m. and 4 p.m.

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

The Kate Goldman Family Series at The Des Moines Playhouse presents "Alice in Wonderland." Tickets may be purchased online at dmplayhouse.com and by phone at 515-277-6261. "Alice in Wonderland" is presented in the Studio Theatre and is sponsored by Nationwide.

Great Strides Walk

Saturday, May 17, 10 a.m.

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

Outlets of Des Moines will host the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation Iowa Chapter's Great Strides Walk. The 2-mile walk starts at 10 a.m. with registration opening at 9 a.m. Now celebrating 70 years as an organization, all funds raised benefit the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and its mission to cure cystic fibrosis. Sign up information and various ways to raise funds for the cause can be found on the chapter website at FundRaiseCFF.org/DSM2025.

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. 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. ■

IT'S NOT spoiling; it's self-care for you and your pet

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, and if you've ever cuddled your dog after a rough day or whispered secrets to your cat like it's your therapist, you already know: Pets are good for the soul. Their goofy antics, nonjudgmental snuggles, and the way they light up when you walk through the door can lower stress, ease anxiety and even reduce blood pressure.

So how do we thank them for all that emotional support? By caring not just for their physical health, but their mental health, too.

Yes, mental health matters for pets. An overstimulated cat or a lonely pup can experience the animal equivalent of burnout. Pampering helps — when done with purpose. Sure, the occasional pup cup or plush bed is lovely, but pampering isn't about excess. It's about intentional care.

The simplest and most meaningful way to pamper your pet? Your time. Pets crave connection. Social interaction prevents loneliness and enriches their emotional lives. Depending on the species, this might look like a walk around the block, a game of laser tag with your cat, or a few



minutes training your parrot or cuddling your guinea pig and making sure they have a companion.

You can also make grooming part of your bonding routine. Brushing and bathing (when done gently and at your pet's comfort level) can be a relaxing ritual that supports both hygiene and connection.

Just like us, pets are individuals with personalities shaped by temperament, past experiences, life stage and even hormones. They thrive when allowed to express themselves through species-specific behavior in a calm, enriching environment. Pay attention to triggers like unpredictable noise, visitors or schedule changes. Simple changes like calming music, enrichment activities to add interest and encourage exploration, or anti-anxiety tools during fireworks can make a world of difference.

So go ahead. Give your dog that extra treat or let your cat commandeer the comfiest blanket. Pampering isn't just fun — it's a meaningful way to show love. And, in a world that often feels overwhelming, those quiet, intentional moments with your pet may just be what both of you need to breathe a little easier. ■

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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LIBRARY

By Molly Guerra, Public Services Manager

ANKENY Kirkendall Public Library news

You're invited to kick off your summer at Ankeny Kirkendall Public Library.

On **Thursday, May 29**, we will be hosting three amazing events for kids, teens and adults to celebrate our Summer Library Program Kickoff.

Starting at 6:30 p.m. in The District, Jim Gill will perform classic family songs, and adults are welcome to enjoy music by Chad Elliott starting at 8 p.m. Tweens and teens (grades 6-12) are invited to the library to watch Hypnotist Ben Ulin. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. with traditional and boneless wings generously provided by Buffalo Wild Wings. Additional

snacks and pops are available before the show starts at 8 p.m. Registration is required, and, if we have 150 attendees, teens can vote for the color of the edges of Teen Librarian Brena Barton's hair for the entire summer.

Following the Teen SLP Kickoff, on **Saturday, May 31**, tweens and teens are invited to celebrate National Comic Book Day and learn how to create their own comics with Chet and Jerry from Do Art Productions. If you are interested in art, check out the many other summer teen craft events like T-Shirt Bags, Candle Making, Tic-Tac-Toe to Go, and attend weekly Fiber and Friends meetings.

Interested in STEM? The library has partnered with Mr. Burns, an automotive professor and chair of the Automotive Program at DMACC to host "I Wish I Learned: Basic Car Maintenance" on **June 3** in DMACC Building 13 for teens and young adults ages 13 and older. We also partnered with math professor and chair of the NIACC Math, Engineering and IT Department, Brent Hamilton, to create Alka-Seltzer-fueled rockets on **June 17**.

Throughout the Summer Library Program, all participants can submit their weekly reading logs for a prize drawing of gift cards for various Ankeny locations. Sign up for book clubs throughout the summer to help complete your logs. Participants also have a free book prize available at the library **June 24-29**.

For night owls, the library will be open after hours for Paint n' Pops on **June 21**, Kahoot Trivia Night on **June 27**, Mario Kart on **July 14** and Yoga with Meghan May on **June 20** and **July 22**. Teens are also invited by Happy Faces Production to board S.S. Carnage to help find a killer (or be the killer) on **July 17**, "Murder Mystery: Waves of Danger."

As a prize for completing the Summer Library Program, teens can attend Capture the Flag – Laser Tag outside the library on **July 28** and the Family Summer Library Finale Pool Party at Cascade Falls on **July 30**, the free prize for all participants.

We will have additional programs for all ages throughout the summer. Visit Ankeny.librarycalendar.com for more. ■

Ankeny Kirkendall Public Library

1250 S.W. District Drive
515-965-6460

www.ankenyiowa.gov/Library
Monday - Thursday: 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Friday and Saturday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday: 1-5 p.m.



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FINANCIAL moves for a growing family

If you're adding a child to your family, it's an exciting time, and you have much to anticipate. Of course, this new addition will bring many changes in your life, so you'll want to be prepared — especially in terms of your finances.

What financial moves should you make as you welcome your new child? Here are a few to consider:

• **Estimate expenses — and create a new budget.** You will likely have several new expenses associated with a new child, ranging from relatively minor purchases — car seat, stroller, crib, etc. — to potentially much larger costs, such as a vehicle with more space or even a new home. You'll need to estimate what you can afford for these initial expenses and then work into your budget the everyday additional costs — food, clothing, uncovered medical expenses and so on.

• **Look at options to support taking time off work.** Depending on where you live and where you work, you might have some sources of support if you take time off from work after the arrival of your child. These options may include paid time off — such as sick leave and vacation time — paid family leave, short-term disability insurance, and some benefits from the Family Medical and Leave Act.

• **Determine how childcare will be provided.** Childcare can be expensive and, in some areas, hard to find. Well before the arrival of your child, start looking for childcare, so you can explore your options and start factoring in the costs to your cash flow and monthly budget. During your search, look at offerings from local community centers, religious institutions and nonprofit organizations, some of which may offer low-cost child care programs.

• **Contribute to your emergency fund.** It's generally a good idea to keep up to six months' worth of living expenses in a liquid, low-risk account to pay for unexpected costs — and, with a growing family, these costs may well increase as your child grows older.

• **Look at your tax situation.** You may want to consult with a tax professional to determine whether you qualify for credits or deductions, such as the dependent care credit, the federal child tax credit, and adoption-related credits (if you adopted a child). Also, you may want to update your Form W-4 to add a dependent — a move that may lower your tax withholding and increase your take-home pay.

• **Start your education planning.** It's never too soon to think about paying for costs associated with your child's education. You might want to consider a 529 education savings plan, which offers tax benefits and can be used for college and many vocational programs, as well as some K-12 costs. A financial advisor can help you explore all available education savings options.

• **Check your insurance.** You'll need to add your child to your existing health insurance, but if you don't have insurance, see whether you qualify for Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), or look for a marketplace plan at healthcare.gov. You might also need to purchase additional life insurance coverage. And with a growing family to support, you might want to add disability coverage to protect your income against short- or long-term disabilities.

Bringing a new child into your life is certainly a joyous occasion — and by being financially prepared, you can make the whole experience even more enjoyable. ■



Job change?

Whether retiring or changing jobs, you'll want to know your retirement account options.



There are four potential options for your 401(k) when leaving an employer:

- Leave it in your former employer's 401(k) plan, if allowed by the plan.
- Move it to your new employer's 401(k) plan, if you've changed employers and your new employer plan allows for it.
- Roll the account over to an individual retirement account (IRA).
- Cash it out, which is subject to potential tax consequences.

We can talk through your financial goals and find the option that works best for you.



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FAITH

By Pastor John Wagner

SO that...

Matthew 5:16 "In the same way, let your light shine before people, so that they can see your good deeds and give honor to your Father in heaven."

One of many lessons I was taught by pastoral mentors was to always look for "so that" statements in scripture. As we study scripture (or virtually anything at all) ever before us is the opportunity to learn from God and then ask for what we are being taught or prepared.

I've had multiple opportunities over the last month to participate in or observe rites of passage for young people here in Ankeny — events and assemblies for scholastic achievement and gatherings of congregants to honor religious confirmation or faith "progression." A number of themes were consistent across these events. Some of those themes were encouraging young people to be the best they could be, to continue to learn and grow, and to never stop dreaming and aspiring toward new heights.

Without regard to your age or life-stage, I encourage you in the same. Try to be the best person you can be. Never stop learning. Keep dreaming and aspiring and believing that there are experiences waiting for you to discover. Think more on God's grace and love, learning to accept it in gratitude each day.

So that...

As it pertains to "faith," I believe that "being the best we can be" includes selflessness and humility. Learning something new every day might be so that I can help someone else in the things that I learn. Keep dreaming and aspiring, but also consider whether your dreams are necessarily tied to the experience of others. What we learn and then express becomes a light that has the opportunity to bless others and point back to the God who offered us the chance to learn, dream and grow.

This article is far from perfect, but it is a light of sorts as well. It was not intended to draw attention to its author but, instead, to point to the Author of all things. God loves you. Our growth, our development, our increase in knowledge or skill (even wealth and position) can be redeemed in God's love and used as a way to shine a light toward God, Holy purpose, connection, salvation, grace and love.

As you read this article — right now — you are a light. You have some level of control over the type of light you shine. Your knowledge of God's love for you — in maturity or infancy — shines brightly... SO THAT God might be known.

What good are diplomas, accolades, achievements or even knowledge if we end up just placing them on a shelf? What good is a lamp if you cover its light? A well-lit city on a hilltop cannot be hidden. In the same way, let your light shine before others that they might see your good deeds, achievements, knowledge and growth and give glory and honor to God in heaven. Let what you learn and become show people that God is real and that God loves them. ■



Information provided by John Wagner, campus pastor, Christian Life Center, Ankeny First United Methodist Church, john.wagner@ankenfirst.org

MEET Alex Louden

Ankeny student returns to Parkview as educator.

Alex Louden completed his first year of teaching in Des Moines Public Schools before coming to Parkview Middle School three years ago. However, along his journey to becoming a teacher, he worked for about three years as an associate in the school where he now teaches seventh-grade math.

"It was certainly a role that laid the foundation for my career in education," he said. "It's wild to think that I have gone from walking these halls as a student to then as a paraprofessional, and now as a teacher."

Of course, for Louden, Parkview is like home.

"I feel comfortable here, and I have fostered many great relationships with the people within. I know that every person in my building is willing and able to support each another, and the sense of camaraderie is something that I hope Parkview never loses. There are a lot of talented, effective teachers, and I believe that this is something that helps me to hold myself to a higher standard as a professional and continue to grow my abilities."

Louden considered many different content areas when deciding what he wanted to teach, but math seemed to bring out the best in him. He enjoys the variety of ways to engage students in learning math and the opportunity to help students develop their problem-solving skills. To him, math is like exercise for the mind, and regardless of what students decide to do with their lives, they will benefit from the work they put into their mathematics learning.

It can be a challenge to come into a math class with a multitude of different learning needs and attitudes towards the content. The hardest thing about teaching math is getting students to reshape their self-perceptions as learners and adopt the mindset that everyone can do math.

"I like to remind my students when they are doubting themselves that they are all problem-solvers, and it doesn't make a difference whether they are solving a conflict with a friend or solving an equation, each one of them is capable of applying critical-thinking skills to arrive at a solution."

The biggest reward is starting to see a student's confidence grow and the number of "a-ha" moments begin to increase as they apply themselves whole-heartedly to their learning.

It isn't all serious in the classroom though. Louden has made it a tradition to prank the students on his team when they have fun homeroom activity rotations before break by hyping up the movie trivia competition he has in his classroom — only to have every single question be about the smash-hit movie "Shrek" (2001).

"I always get a kick out of their reactions once they catch on to the joke. I guess, since I'm sharing this, I may have to change what I do next year."

When he's not in school, you can find Louden running around town training for an upcoming marathon or going on walks with his wife. They also like to travel, especially to national parks. ■



Alex Louden, seventh-grade math teacher at Parkview Middle School, enjoys a dress-up day.



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WHEN IS the right time to start the conversation about senior living?

For many families in Ankeny, Polk City and across Iowa, the idea of moving a loved one into senior living can feel overwhelming. It is a delicate topic — one that is easy to delay until a crisis forces the decision. But waiting until the last minute often creates more stress, fewer choices and missed opportunities for a better quality of life.

So, when is the right time to start the conversation?

The answer is: sooner than you think.

Most older adults want to maintain their independence for as long as possible. But what we often overlook is that true independence can actually be supported — and extended — by the right environment. Senior living isn't about giving up freedom. In many cases, it's about regaining it.

Here are a few early signs that it might be time to start talking:

- You notice safety concerns like falls, confusion with medications, or difficulty navigating stairs or the shower.
- Meals are skipped or nutrition suffers, either from lack of appetite or difficulty cooking.
- Social isolation is increasing, and your loved one is spending more and more time alone.



• Caregiver burnout is building, whether you're the caregiver or another family member is feeling the strain.

The truth is, many families wait too long. They hold off out of love, guilt or the hope that things will improve. But the earlier you begin the conversation — when your loved one is still relatively independent — the more involved they can be in the decision-making process. They can tour communities, meet staff, and choose the place that feels like home, rather than feeling rushed or forced into a move later.

Starting the discussion doesn't mean making an immediate decision. It simply opens the door. It creates space for questions, hopes, concerns and thoughtful planning. It's not about pushing someone out of their home — it's about preserving dignity, safety and joy in the years ahead.

If you're unsure how to begin, start with curiosity: "What would make life easier for you right now?" "What would help you feel more comfortable and confident at home?" These gentle prompts can go a long way.

Talking early isn't just smart — it's compassionate. And it gives your loved one the chance to make their last move their best move. ■

Information provided by Erik Ofloy, Sales and Marketing Director at CopperWood at Prairie Trail, 2855 S.W. Vintage Parkway, Ankeny, IA 50023, 515-425-3262, eofloy@copperwoodsl.com.

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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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ANKENY celebrates 150 years

A sesquicentennial year full of history and community

This year marks a major milestone for Ankeny as the city celebrates its 150th anniversary since its founding in 1875.

The Ankeny Area Historical Society, along with the Sesquicentennial Committee, is making sure that every month in 2025 offers a special way to remember and celebrate.

“What started with 100 people in 1875 is now over 76,000 people,” says Lois O’Donnell, co-president of the Ankeny Area Historical Society and longtime advocate for preserving Ankeny’s past.

O’Donnell and the other four members on the Sesquicentennial Committee, including JoAnn Adamson, have spent the year creating opportunities for the community to connect with its history and each other.

The celebration officially kicked off in January with a special video screening of “Ankeny: The Sesquicentennial of a Remarkable Community,” which is available for viewing on YouTube. The video was scripted by committee member Ron Sampson, former editor and publisher of the Ankeny Press-Citizen.

In February, the Historical Society hosted a vintage valentine’s party, while March shifted the spotlight to the Ankeny Police Department, offering the public a chance to meet officers.

April welcomed Ankeny’s new mayor, Bobbi Bentz, with a community event designed to help residents get to know their new leader. In May, the spotlight turns to the Ankeny founders, John Fletcher Ankeny and family. A descendant living in Johnston, who has researched and written extensively about the family, will give a talk and bring other descendants to share stories and answer questions.

“For example, John Fletcher not only founded Ankeny, he was also in the Gold Rush in California,” shares O’Donnell.

He later traveled to Hawaii, developed a love for pineapple, and attempted to grow the fruit in Florida — an effort thwarted by poor soil conditions. The family also had ties to Abraham Lincoln’s presidential campaign in Illinois.

In June, the Historical Society will host a “Night at the Museum” during Iowa Museum Week. Folks will dress as historical characters and share stories of the coal mines that were once an integral part of Ankeny’s economy.

The summer’s biggest event, however, will be the Chicken Dinner on Saturday, July 12 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Set in the Ankeny Market Pavilion (AMP) in historic Uptown, where the town first began, the event will welcome guests for a community meal reminiscent of the Lions Club Chicken Dinners held in decades past. Local organizations, including the



Lois O’Donnell and JoAnn Adamson of the Ankeny Area Historical Society with the group’s Residents’ Choice certificate.



Lions Club and the Boy Scouts, will help serve the meal, and the Ankeny Band is expected to provide live music. Tickets are available in advance on the Historical Society’s website.

That same day, the museum will be open from noon to 3 p.m., and the Daughters of the American Revolution will be there in costume as the Fletcher family.

The celebration continues into August with the Historical Society’s annual Ice Cream Social, a Sunday afternoon tradition. September will feature a creative display of student artwork — coloring sheets about Ankeny’s history, hanging throughout the museum.

October promises fall fun with the annual pumpkin sale, chili cook-off and pie bake-off. November will feature a special veterans forum, where representatives from each branch of service will speak about their experiences. And December will round out the year with a festive holiday bake sale and visits from Santa and Mrs. Claus at the barn at the Historical Society.

It’s certainly a year filled with fun for the whole community. ■

DEAR Old Diamond

Editor's note: The following poem was submitted by Adam Hammond, fifth grade, Abbie Grove Elementary.

Dear old baseball diamond, dusty, dirty,
Beautiful.

Seats for spectators
Cage for pitching
Perfect for practice.

Fun in the sun
Dirt on my pants
Sweat on my brow
Here, I am home.

Bases for stealing
Mound for pitching
Seats for watching
Field for fielding.

Dear old baseball diamond
We shall meet again soon. ■

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DEAR OLD DIAMOND

Dear Old baseball diamond, dusty, dirty,
Beautiful.

Seats for spectators
Cage for pitching
Perfect for practice.

Fun in the Sun
Dirt on My pants
Sweat on my Brow
Here, I am Home.

Bases for stealing
Mound for Pitching
Seats for watching
Field for fielding.

Dear Old base ball diamond
We shall meet again soon.

5 STRATEGIES for saving money

Ready to take control of your savings? The key is making smarter choices to set yourself up for financial success. Here are five ways to start saving today.



1. Set up automatic

savings. An easy way to start saving money is by setting up automatic savings so you don't have to think about it. For example:

- Set up recurring bank transfers.
- Split your employer's direct deposit into savings and checking accounts.

2. Start an emergency fund. An emergency fund is a tool for financial freedom. When you're prepared, you are better able to go about your life without worrying about the "what ifs."

Steps to start one:

- Define your why.
- Start with small goals.
- Prioritize needs without sacrificing joy.

- Choose the right savings account for you.
- Celebrate milestones along the way.

3. Save for life's major milestones. You can stay financially stable while achieving your dreams. Start saving early for major life events, such as:

- Education
- Home purchase
- Vacations
- Retirement

4. Pay down debt. Reducing debt can open doors to financial freedom and opportunities to diversify your money. Here are a few benefits of doing so:

- Increases your disposable income.
- Improves your credit score.
- Gives financial peace of mind.

5. Save for every stage. No matter where you are in life, financial stability should always remain a top priority. Here are key focus areas for each decade:

• 20s: Lay the foundation – Start saving and building an emergency fund.

• 30s: Build financial stability – Increase retirement contributions and automate savings.


• 40s: Maximize earning potential – Utilize catch-up contributions, review and adjust plans.

• 50s: Prepare for retirement – Max out retirement contributions and review existing plans.

• 60s and beyond: Enjoy retirement – Create a withdrawal plan and stay invested.



In April, America Saves ran its #AmericaSavesWeek campaign to promote awareness, education and tips to help you build financial security. Learn more about these topics at AmericaSaves.com and speak with a banker to create a savings plan unique to your financial goals. ■

Information provided by Tracy Gibson, VP, Ankeny Branch Manager, 515-965-2497, tgibson@bankerstrust.com, 1925 N. Ankeny Blvd., Ankeny, IA 50023.



EARN \$400

when you open a primary checking account by August 30, 2025*

*To be eligible for the bonus, you must open a primary checking account which constitutes as a BreakFree Checking Plus or Direct Checking Plus account ("Bonus Account") in person at a branch with a minimum opening deposit of \$25. To qualify for the bonus, the following transactions must post and settle through the Bonus Account within 60 days from the date of its opening:

- 1) 25 debit transactions. A "debit transaction" for the purpose of this section means a debit to your Bonus Account that originated from an ACH, Bankers Trust bill payment, drafting checks, or use of your debit card as a method of payment or purchase. A "debit transaction" does not include debits to your Bonus Account that originated from ATM withdrawals or other debits to your Bonus Account; and,
- 2) 2 direct deposits (ACH credits) or Express Deposits (aka mobile deposits) of at least \$200 each. A "deposit" for the purposes of this section does not include ATM deposits, deposits made in person, account-to-account transfers, or other deposits to your Bonus Account.

In addition, bonus eligibility will be verified 60 days after the Bonus Account's opening. Bonus will only be credited if the account is currently in an open status with a positive balance. Should you have met all eligibility requirements and are not subject to the limitations and exclusions contained herein, the bonus will be credited to the Bonus Account within 75 days of its opening. Limit one bonus per household. Offer not available to existing Bankers Trust checking customers or those that have had a checking account with Bankers Trust within six months of Bonus Account opening. Employees of Bankers Trust and/or its affiliates are not eligible for bonus. Offer available through August 30, 2025. Early closing fee of \$400 will be charged if your Bonus Account is closed within 12 months of opening. Annual Percentage Yield (APY) on BreakFree Checking Plus is 0.60% for balances less than \$5,000.00 and 0.55% for balances \$5,000.00 and over, effective April 28, 2025, and subject to change without notice. Fees may reduce earnings. Rate may change after the account is opened.

Scan the QR code or stop by your local branch to get started. (515) 245-2863 | BankersTrust.com

WHY A guardianship may be a better option than a power of attorney

A durable financial power of attorney is an instrument that allows an individual to designate another to act on his or her behalf. It is a key component to a comprehensive estate plan. But, while a power of attorney is a useful instrument, there are some limitations.

First, a power of attorney is easier to revoke than one would think. In Iowa, a power of attorney may be revoked at any time. To be effective, the person must communicate the intent to revoke; this communication can be oral or written. Therefore, a power of attorney, while a powerful and useful instrument, can be easily revoked based on a single statement. Since there is a lack of formal requirements, this may allow undue influence to affect an incapacitated



individual and persuade the individual to revoke the power of attorney.

Second, while a power of attorney is not subject to a court's approval or rejection, a power of attorney can be challenged, and a court can revoke the instrument. One who is challenging a power of attorney often will allege that the agent abused the authority in some manner. The challenger can then seek revocation of the power of attorney.

Third, some states refuse to recognize an out-of-state power of attorney. We have had clients attempt to use a valid Iowa document in another state, only to be told that it doesn't comply with that state's requirements.

Finally, certain federal agencies will not accept a power of attorney. For example, the Social Security Administration will not accept a power of attorney for Social Security purposes. Other agencies, like the Veterans Administration, may only recognize a specific type of power of

attorney.

One solution for this issue is obtaining a guardianship. A guardianship appoints a guardian to be responsible for an individual's needs. The guardian is allowed to make decisions regarding the individual's medical treatment, educational or vocational services and personal care. Unlike a power of attorney, federal agencies will accept a guardianship.

Determining the best option for your unique situation may seem difficult. If you have questions, an experienced attorney can analyze your situation, explain all available options, weigh the benefits of each option, and ultimately implement a plan for when you become incapacitated or legally incompetent. ■

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

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PALLIATIVE care: What is it, and how does it help?

Q: My wife's nurse practitioner suggested we look into palliative care. I'm nervous, as this is not a type of care I'm familiar with. My wife has diabetes and suffers from congestive heart failure. While her care team says she could live with her conditions for several years, we would both like her to have a better quality of life.

What can palliative care do for her?

A: Great question. Palliative care is a specialized form of care focused on providing relief from the symptoms, pain, and stress of a serious illness. Rather than trying to cure the illness itself, palliative care is designed to improve the quality of life for both the person living with illness and their loved ones.

Here's what you should know about palliative care.

Anyone with a serious or chronic health condition, regardless of their prognosis, can take advantage of it. The goal is to alleviate suffering and improve comfort by managing physical symptoms while also addressing emotional, social, and spiritual needs.

A variety of specialists, such as physicians, nurses, social workers, chaplains, and therapists, make up a palliative care team. They will all work together to create a care plan that's tailored to your wife's needs.

It helps manage symptoms such as pain, fatigue, nausea, breathing



difficulties, and anything else that goes along with illness. If your wife is dealing with discomfort related to her chronic condition, palliative care can significantly help decrease that.

It also supports family members. Assistance offered with palliative care can include counseling, caregiver support and education, and help navigating health care systems and decisions.

Palliative care doesn't replace other treatments. It can be used alongside curative treatments, helping to manage the side effects or help cope with difficult symptoms during treatments like chemotherapy or dialysis.

It's offered anywhere. If receiving care at home is preferable to you and your wife, make sure you find a provider that offers home-based palliative care.

The overall aim will be to provide your wife with enhanced quality of life while managing the challenges presented by her conditions. Palliative care is highly personalized, and most families report that it enhances comfort and helps everyone navigate the health care journey more smoothly. Best wishes to you both. ■

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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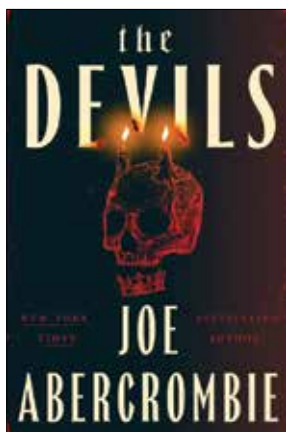
'The Devils'

There is a subgenre of fantasy that I haven't always appreciated. Grimdark novels often leave me feeling a little hollow and depressed. As such, it took me far too long to appreciate Joe Abercrombie's incredible skill and masterful ability to make me fall in love with indifferent, morally grey characters living in vicious worlds.

Set in a twisted medieval Europe on the brink of apocalypse, Brother Diaz is an out-of-place but ambitious monk tasked with leading a ragtag group of outcast devils including a vampire, a werewolf and a cursed knight in an attempt to create an empress out of a street thief. This impossible, slightly ridiculous quest leads to a rollercoaster of blood-soaked battles and heroic deeds and brings together unexpectedly sweet found family.

Brilliant character studies are not typically found in the kind of grimdark worlds we would expect from Abercrombie, but his skill is undeniable. I loved each and every one of the bitter, broken people he created in this fantastically exciting, hilarious and, yes, dark story. I am so excited to see what happens next. ■

Review by Julie Goodrich



By Joe Abercrombie
5/6/25
560 pages
\$29.99
Tor Books

'The Memory Palace: True Short Stories of the Past'

History is written by the loud voices — the bold, daring, dashing victors who live to hold the pen. But there is so much more to where we have ended up than just the names on the marquee sign. Enter the award-winning podcast turned book, "The Memory Palace," a broad array of bite-sized stories centered on lesser known, everyday kinds of historical moments that tend to get lost behind the big, bombastic tales everyone learns in school.

A seemingly random mix of short stories litter these pages, but the themes of hidden gems and the ripples of innocuous moments become clear as the author jumps from the first manned space flight to Baby Ruth candy bars to the advent of photography. The focus is on the "in-between moments," as he calls them. These minor notes resonate long after they are forgotten.

These are stories of human perseverance, imagination and awe. Tiny bits of color commentary on the wider arc of American history. This is a book for the folks who need to always know what is under the surface. ■

Review by Julie Goodrich



By Nate DiMeo
11/19/24
336 pages
\$33
Random House



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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provider about hepatitis
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Source: cdc.gov 4/25

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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

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WELLNESS

By Tricia Heberer

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7. Safe and backed by clinical research.

8. Free from unnecessary fillers or irritants found in some OTC products. Using a medical-grade vitamin C serum daily (morning routine, before sunscreen) ensures maximum skin benefits. ■



Information provided by Tricia Heberer, Owner/LE, Luxe Medical Spa and Aesthetics, 88 Paine Circle, Suite 7, Bondurant, IA 50035, theberer@luxemedicalspa.net, 515-630-8637.

IS CHIROPRACTIC covered by insurance?

• **Medicare covers chiropractic under Part B.** If a patient has Medicare and no secondary/supplemental insurance, the patient is initially responsible for paying the annual Part B deductible. (This deductible applies to the combined charges for all Part B medical providers, not solely for chiropractic visits.) After the deductible is met, Medicare pays 80%. The patient pays the remaining 20%.

• **If a patient has Medicare plus a secondary/supplemental insurance,** the secondary/supplemental insurance may pay the annual deductible. Once the deductible is met, Medicare again pays 80%, and the secondary/supplemental insurance pays the remaining 20%.

It is very important to note: Medicare only pays for the actual spinal adjustment. Medicare does not pay for examinations, acupuncture, ultrasound, massage, X-rays or other common chiropractic services. Medicare does not have a visit limit but does require that treatments be deemed medically necessary. Medicare does not pay for routine maintenance treatments; however, patients can continue care on a self-pay basis.

• **Iowa Medicaid/Title 19/MCO Medicaid** cover chiropractic adjustments and X-rays. The number of treatments allowed is determined by the diagnosis or condition being treated.

• **Commercial insurance policies** usually cover chiropractic services. Some require patients to pay a co-pay ranging from \$10 to \$90 per visit. Others require patients to pay a co-insurance or percentage of the total cost ranging from 10-50%. Some have a combination of the two. On occasion, a commercial insurance requires a patient to pay a deductible prior to paying its portion. Health Savings Accounts can be used to pay for care regardless of whether or not the provider participates with your insurance plan.

• **Automobile insurance** usually covers chiropractic services under the MedPay portion of your policy. Healthcare-related bills are sent to your own auto insurance company despite which driver was at fault. Your auto insurance company will be reimbursed from the other party's auto insurance company if the accident was not your fault. MedPay is also designed to ensure your healthcare-related treatments are covered, even if the other driver does not have insurance.

• **Veteran's Administration (V.A.)** covers chiropractic services. The V.A. only pays for spinal adjustments. Because the Central Iowa V.A. has a chiropractor on staff, the patient has to ask the V.A. for a referral to another chiropractor if the staff chiropractor cannot meet their needs.

• **Iowa Worker's Compensation,** unfortunately for the many patients who could be helped with chiropractic services, does not cover them at this time. On occasion, a patient can receive covered chiropractic care if the worker's compensation case manager approves it.

• **No Insurance.** Most chiropractic care is affordable and, in some cases, less costly than the co-pays required by some insurance companies. ■

Information provided by Christopher M. Renze, D.C., D.I.B.C.N., of Renze Chiropractic Clinic, P.C. For more information, visit www.renzechiro.com or call the office at 965-3844.

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LET'S talk events

What I've learned as an event planner

Event planning can be stressful and feel overwhelming at times, especially if you are doing it alone. As the director of events at the Ankeny Chamber, the key to event planning is to plan ahead. By planning ahead, you will be able to streamline your event and address any challenges that may develop.



Set goals.

What is the purpose of the event? Who will attend, and how does everyone involved benefit from this event? Is the goal to make a profit? How will you track your event's progress? Stick to the mission at hand, and it will make your event planning experience more enjoyable.

Set a budget.

Meaning, set a realistic budget. Make a checklist of everything that will need to be purchased. Shop around for the most inexpensive way to purchase those items. Cheaper isn't always best, but setting a budget can help you determine how to get the most "bang for your buck." Think about items that could be donated or even create sponsorships to help pay for items. Also, be sure to plan for any unexpected expenses that might come up, and don't forget to tip your vendors.

Create a committee.

It's OK to ask for help. Putting an entire event together (no matter what size) can be demanding and time-consuming. Get a group together to volunteer, whether they are neighbors or close friends. They can be on the "planning committee" to help with logistics and share items or volunteer for the day of the event. Don't forget to ask for help with tearing down your event afterwards — planning this can sometimes be forgotten.

Market your event.

Depending on the size of your event, create a detailed marketing plan. If your event is a paid event, people may need extra time to learn more about it before they commit to purchasing a ticket, so consider marketing your event sooner. Plan ahead and schedule your social media posts so you're not scrambling to find something to share. Use various platforms to market your event and stick to your budget. Pay attention to your target audience and what your return on investment (ROI) will look like.

Manage the event.

Get your logistics in order and set expectations for everyone involved. Verify delivery times, volunteer arrivals and duties, and allow enough time to set up and tear down afterwards. Plan ahead, and your event will be successful and memorable for everyone who attends, including those who created it. ■

Information provided by Diane Weber, Director of Events & Communications at the Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce, 1360 S.W. Park Square Drive, Ankeny, IA 50023, 515-964-0685, dweber@ankeny.org.





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OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON Cutting

A ribbon cutting was held for 30hop, 1535 S.W. Market St., Suite 100, Ankeny, on March 17.



A ribbon cutting was held for 30hop, 1535 S.W. Market St., Suite 100, Ankeny, on March 17.



Erik Schewmaker, Darin Blum and Dan Blum



Kaylee Peterson, Tom Hayes and Grayson Graham



Colin Menegay



Michael Elbert and Michael Ehlinger



Kailee VanHorn, Izzy Sterling, Kayla Sergio, Madison Baughman and Allyssa McConnell

OUT & ABOUT

RESIDENTS' CHOICE

Award Winners



Sharlyn Estrem, Mackenzie Cowden, Jamie Anderson, Trent Murphy and Diane Weber accept the Residents' Choice certificates for Ankeny Area Chamber of Commerce.



Roxanne Kadoun, Lindsey Lane, Amanda Gigler and Alyssa Crowe accept the Residents' Choice certificate for Ankeny Animal and Avian Clinic.



Erica Seelye, Mandy Pietig and Todd Pietig accept the Residents' Choice certificate for Ankeny Family Vision Center.



William Pierce accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for The Bridges at Ankeny.



Jadyn Miller, manager, accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for Earl May Garden Center.



Jacquelyn Duke accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for favorite Realtor.



DJ Doff and Misty Trogon accept the Residents' Choice certificate for Des Moines Deck LLC.



Jessica Hayes accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for Funky Zebras Boutique.



Sean Munro accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for District 36 Wine Bar and Grille.

RESIDENTS' CHOICE

Award Winners



Jacki Banning, Lindsey Foss and Maggie Negrete accept the Residents' Choice certificates for Real Deals.



Shelby McCullough and Robyn White accept the Residents' Choice certificate for Stuff Etc.



Accepting the Residents' Choice certificate for Lamberti, Murphy & Strong are, front row: Jeff Lamberti, Laura Murphy and William Strong, and, back row: Erin Baldwin, Emily Neubauer, Tamaiya Bradford, Holly Randell, Christa Petrie and Ruth Kabitzke.



Stacey Sporrer, Sheila Cason, Kathy Bovee, Cheryl Newhouse, Krista Clark and Linda Sash accept the Residents' Choice certificate for Our Lady's Little Learners.



Scott Rains accepts Residents' Choice certificates for favorite church, Lutheran Church of Hope Ankeny, and favorite pastor.



Marla Earp accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for Xoxo Gift & Home.



Lacie Navin accepts the Residents' Choice certificate for Sunmed Your CBD Store.



Accepting the Residents' Choice certificate for Our Lady's Immaculate Heart Catholic Church are, front row: Fr. Jason Lee, Connie Gori, Patty Mayer, Kathy Bovee, Fr. James Ahenkora; second row: Mary Sankey, Christina Kness, Jackie King, Laura Kutscher, Abby Henderson; and, back row: Tom Primmer, Randy Henderson, Brad Ratkovich and Matt Dougan.



Kelsey Searcy, Anna Galioto, Zeb Miller, Andrew Barnes and Heather Snyder accept the Residents' Choice certificate for TNT Landscaping & Nursery.

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