

Living

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they go the extra mile
to spoil their critters

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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 Sean Dengler

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.

Kelsey Anderson's daughter, Evelyn, calls Vanilla, the family's pet, her "sister."



A journey to the pampered life

Kim Weeks' sweet little dog, Louie, has had quite the journey.

"We are his third home," Kim says. "His first home he was named Lucky, second home, Angus. After his back was broken by a larger dog laying on him, and he went through surgery and therapy, he came to our home and became Louie. We will be his forever home."

They found this dog, named after the St. Louis Cardinals, through Rescueme.org. Louie has completed his journey to the good life.

"He is a charmer, and we love spoiling this little guy," Kim says. "He loves his treats, his belly rubbed, is very well known by the neighbors and has his own book."

Louie's book, "Call Me Louie," is available on Amazon, and he has another book coming out this fall or winter.

Louie's comfort is a high priority.

"The dog bed is moved by the fireplace, and he sleeps between my husband and myself," Kim says. "He has his own paw print stamp. Neighbors love Louie, and he has houses that he knows give him treats."

Louie also gets on-demand belly rubs and enjoys car rides, getting groomed and sporting St. Louis Cardinals paraphernalia. It is also hard for Kim to decide what she likes most about her pooch.

"It's so hard to say," Kim ponders, "He's just gentle and loving and a great snuggler."

Louie deserves the best, according to Kim.

"First, he's adorable, he's been through a lot in his life, he's tough, and a star about town."

Pampering Louie is a rewarding experience.

"The love I receive in return!" Kim exclaims. "He follows me everywhere, and I want him to feel secure and safe. He's just amazing."

Another family member

While only a year old, Kelsey Anderson's Shiba Inu, named Vanilla, has a significant role in her family.

"She is essentially part of the family," Kelsey says. "She goes everywhere with us. She has her own seat in the car, she sleeps with us, and she has her own 'dog room' for when we are gone and she can't come with."

This dog room is distinctive.

"Vanilla's dog room is special because it's her own space," Kelsey explains. "She has beds and doggy décor. There is a sound machine in case she needs to block out construction noise or fireworks."



Kim Weeks' dog, Louie, is the star of his own book.



Kelsey Anderson, her daughter, Evelyn, and Vanilla pose for a family photo.



Vanilla has a room all of her own.

Vanilla, who came from a breeder near St. Louis, gets treated well.

"We treat her like part of the family," Kelsey says. "My daughter calls her 'sister.'"

Their bond is unique.

"Vanilla and Evelyn are definitely bonded. I am the secondary human around here," Kelsey says. "Vanilla loves to be near Evelyn and follow her around. In the mornings, she will stare at Evelyn, willing her to wake up so she can lick her or play with her."

This bond continues to grow.

"They have such a sweet connection. Evelyn is working on obedience training with Vanilla, which will only strengthen their bond."

While Kelsey and Evelyn have taught Vanilla, Vanilla is also returning the favor.

"I think Vanilla is teaching Evelyn patience, responsibility and a little obedience for herself," Kelsey says. "She has to pick up those stuffies around a puppy."

This familial treatment does not end there.

"She snuggles on the couch with us, goes to bed with us, runs errands with us," Kelsey says. "She even joins us for family photos and our Christmas card pictures."

Kelsey adores Vanilla's personality.

"How happy she always is and how much she loves her family."

Vanilla has also created wonderful memories for Kelsey and her family.

"She always is attracted to colorful things, spray painted grass or sidewalk chalk and likes to roll in it to be colorful," Kelsey says. "She likes to steal my shoes and Evelyn's socks and take them outside."

As for why Vanilla deserves the best, it is simple.

"Because she is the best. She didn't ask to be owned by us, and it's our job to make her as happy as she makes us."

An all-around joy

Lloyd, middle name Dean, is an Irish wolfhound/poodle mix that Andrea DeJoode brought home due to a gut feeling.

"Someone's sister on Facebook was rehoming him as a puppy," Andrea says. "I

was wanting a dog, and, for some reason, I just knew I had to have this dog."

When Lloyd first moved in, it was easy for his neighbors to get to know him.

"I moved into a new house almost three years ago and took Lloyd for walks," Andrea says. "People generally stop and ask, 'What kind of dog is that?' because he looks kind of unique. Lloyd is very friendly and loves to meet people, so we met a lot of new neighbors and made friends that way."

It was a good first Dec. 25 in their new space.

"My first Christmas in my new house, eight different people came by to give me Christmas presents, but not for me, for Lloyd," Andrea jokes. "They made homemade treats or bought toys or snacks for him. Some of them don't even know my name other than 'Lloyd's Mom.'"

Treats are never in short supply.

"There was an older gentleman we used to stop and visit, and he liked to give Lloyd treats," Andrea mentions. "His mom later told me that he passed away and that he always loved chatting with us and giving Lloyd water and snacks mid-walk."



Andrea DeJoode shares pool time with her dog, Lloyd Dean.

Lloyd has enjoyed the good life.

"I would say I 'spoil' him (rather than 'pamper,' Andrea says. "He wears fun printed bow ties, and he gets them changed to a new



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one every month when I give him his bath. He has a light up one and themed ones for holidays.”

His birthday is special.

“On his birthday we go on a ‘pet store tour.’ I take him to all the local places and buy him a special treat at each one,” Andrea says. “Pet store employees also love him so they give him lots of treats, too.”

Sleeping like royalty is another part of life Lloyd enjoys.

“I bought a king-size bed so we have more room for Lloyd to sleep with us at night,” Andrea says. “I have gotten us matching outfits for Christmas like people do with their family and kids.”

Lloyd even won over Andrea’s grandpa.

“My grandpa is from the time where people didn’t have pets inside, they had livestock. So, he wasn’t very pro me getting a dog. I got him anyway,” Andrea says. “Grandpa does woodworking and has made him a raised food bowl. When we moved to the new house, he made a sign that says, ‘Welcome. Guests must be approved by Lloyd,’ and made me a little wood carving of a person and a dog. All for the

dog he says, ‘I don’t even like that mutt.’ ”

Lloyd also gets to enjoy the finer parts of life.

“Lloyd is treated well by getting special snacks,” Andrea says. “He always gets the ‘cheese tax’ whenever you open any kind of cheese. On weekends, I make cheesy scrambled eggs, and I share them with him. I bought a dehydrator so I could make him a variety of treats besides store bought. He likes dehydrated bananas, and sweet potatoes are the best. He likes to eat frozen fruit and green beans as well.”

Andrea and Lloyd have grown increasingly fond of each other.

“What I love most about Lloyd is that he taught me unconditional love,” Andrea says. “He is my first dog. And I love that he is so friendly and brings joy to others. Seeing someone else’s face light up seeing, petting my dog, or liking my dog, makes me so happy.”

It makes sense to Andrea to give Lloyd the best.

“Lloyd deserves the best because he is the best,” she says. “I heard a quote once that said, ‘A dog is just part of your life for a time, but



One of Lloyd’s favorite toys is his monkey.

you are their whole life,’ and that really stuck with me. I have other people and things, but I’m his world, so I better give him the best life and world I can because he doesn’t have as long as I do.” ■

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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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Spring Is a Great Time to Clean Out Your Home, Body, and Life!

Spring is upon us! This is often a time to get rid of the winter blues and give your house a spruce up, armed with a feather duster, vacuum, rags, cleaning products, and good old elbow grease. But, let's not pretend that the task is pleasant. A good spring-cleaning is a lot of work, and if your body is unprepared, it can be painful as well.



Dr. Anthony Meyer

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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 Westtown Parkway, 3601 Westtown Parkway, West Des Moines, IA 50266, 515-697-3681



MEET Katie Kephart

Fun and interactive projects engage students.

Katie Kephart grew up in Pleasant Hill in the Des Moines School District and graduated from Upper Iowa University with a degree in elementary education, specializing in reading and language arts. She then worked in various roles with the Des Moines Public Schools for 11 years. During that time, she participated in the BLUE program and earned a master’s degree in urban education with a reading specialty from Drake University.

This school year, Kephart is in her first year teaching first grade at Clay Elementary School. One thing she values most about working with the Southeast Polk Community School District is the sense of trust and support she feels from her superiors.

“My team members bring diverse perspectives and expertise, making it a highly enriching environment for both personal and professional growth,” Kephart says.

Kephart has introduced a variety of fun and interactive projects, particularly in science and social studies. For example, Kephart’s students have practiced cardinal directions by coding bee bots on maps. Her students also created sundials to observe how the sun moves across the sky at different times of day.

“The growth I’ve witnessed has been extraordinary. Students who were initially reading only 10 words per minute in the fall are now exceeding the spring benchmark of 67 words per minute. Just last week, they proudly demonstrated their ability to write numbers 1-120, a skill that few students could accomplish at the start of the year. Their dedication and progress continually inspire me,” Kephart says.

Kephart’s class has a weekly tradition where a student is selected as the “Lucky Duck” of the week. This student takes home the class pet (a stuffed duck named Ice Cream) and documents its adventures in the class journal.

“Seeing students overcome significant challenges — academically, socially or emotionally — is deeply rewarding. Those breakthrough moments remind us why we do this work and make all the hard days worthwhile,” Kephart says.

This summer, Kephart is looking forward to a summer filled with family time. She and her husband reside within the Southeast Polk School District where they are raising their three children. Their 14-year-old daughter participates in track meets, softball games, cheerleading, and was recently selected for the JV team for the upcoming school year. Both their sons enjoy being outdoors, participating in library special events, exploring local parks and more. Their 5-year-old is excited to start kindergarten, and their 3-year-old will begin pre-kindergarten this year. ■



Katie Kephart says her first-grade students make tremendous strides over the course of the school year.

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THE IMPACT of reduced Social Security benefits on senior living care

Social Security is a vital lifeline for many Americans, especially seniors. However, not everyone receives full Social Security benefits, and this shortfall can significantly impact their ability to afford senior living care.

Several factors contribute to reduced or ineligible Social Security benefits. One common reason is an insufficient number of work credits. To qualify for retirement benefits, individuals must earn at least 40 credits, which typically requires about 10 years of work. Those who haven't met this threshold, such as homemakers or individuals with irregular employment histories, may not qualify. Additionally, certain government and railroad employees are excluded from Social Security if they are covered by alternative pension systems.

Claiming benefits early is another factor that reduces monthly payments. While individuals can start collecting Social Security at age 62, doing so results in permanently lower benefits compared to waiting until full retirement age, 67. This decision, often made out of financial necessity, can have long-term consequences.

For seniors relying on Social Security as their primary income, reduced benefits present challenges in affording senior living care. Assisted living facilities, long-term care facilities, and other senior care options often come with substantial costs. According to recent data, the average monthly cost of assisted living in the U.S. exceeds \$4,000, while nursing home care can cost three times as much. For seniors with limited Social Security income, these expenses can quickly become unmanageable.

The financial strain often forces seniors to explore alternative solutions, such as relying on family members for care, seeking government assistance programs like Medicaid, or downsizing to more affordable living arrangements. However, these options may not always provide the level of care or independence seniors need.

To address these challenges, it is crucial for individuals to plan ahead. Maximizing Social Security benefits by delaying claims, exploring supplemental income sources, and understanding eligibility requirements can make a significant difference. Additionally, advocating for policy changes that support seniors with limited benefits could help bridge the gap.

Reduced Social Security benefits are a reality for many Americans, and their impact on senior living care highlights the importance of financial planning and systemic support. By staying informed and proactive, seniors can navigate these challenges and secure a dignified future. ■



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



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.

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Source: cdc.gov 4/25

THE Rampage

Student newspaper builds lifelong skills, stories and opportunities.

The Rampage is the student newspaper that is published monthly at Southeast Polk High School, and it is very beneficial for the staff and readers involved.

Every member of The Rampage staff is passionate about what they do. This year's members who returned from last year are the editors-in-chief, Sophia Juhler and Kirsten Milczski; the design editor, Gavin Heckler; and the arts and culture editor who graduated after first semester, Peyton Barnett.

This year's wave of new members includes Matalyn Beattie, Niya Deng, Payton Dodge, Alivia Groen, Cassie Nolte, Emory Redhead, Aaleah Ruepke, Avis Sinnwell and Claire Touney. And, of course, the wondrous advisor, Austin Kinsey.

"The best part of The Rampage is you literally get to do whatever you want in terms of the stories you want to follow, who you want to talk to, the angles you want the stories to take," said Kinsey.

To start the writing process, the writers participate in Pitch Day, where they throw out all their ideas into the air, then whittle them down until there are just the right number of stories for the pages that are available.

They then assign who will write each article and begin the interviewing, writing and page designing process. However, that doesn't mean a cohesive newspaper exists without challenges.

"It's like taking 12 different voices and trying to get them to sound the same but also keep the life of each individual person in there," said Kinsey.

The Rampage is roughly a month-long process of pitching, interviewing, writing, designing and editing.

"I've gotten to help edit articles, which has taught me a lot about editing, how you should format things, and how different grammar works, which is very helpful as I want to possibly be an editor in the future," said Editor-in-Chief Sophia Juhler. She finds these editing skills helpful not only for her future plans, but also in her current blog, "Read Rebelliously."

In addition to developing skills that transfer to the "real world," being a member of The Rampage provides writers with opportunities they wouldn't otherwise have.

"[It] gives you a chance to develop your interpersonal skills, setting goals for yourself, keeping a personalized schedule, and holding yourself accountable," said Kinsey. "It gives you a chance to talk to people you've



Members of The Rampage student newspaper staff include, front row: Austin Kinsey, Emory Redhead, Alivia Groen, Niya Deng, Claire Touney and Cassie Nolte; and, back row: Matalyn Beattie, Payton Dodge, Kirsten Milczski, Sophia Juhler, Avis Sinnwell, Gavin Heckler and Aaleah Ruepke.

never talked to. I was just thinking, like, what are the cool things that Gavin has done?"

As a writer on The Rampage, I have gotten the chance to interview and interact with people I never would have otherwise. I've interviewed Nick Pueschel and Justin Mulvihill of Public Disturbance Car Club, an organization that gives back to the community in incredible ways. I interviewed Andrew Hoyt, a local musician who opened for AJR a year ago and has big things ahead for him. Another incredible opportunity was getting to interview Jackie Ballagh, a writer on the original Rampage, someone who wrote stories like this 60 years ago.

Having been around for 60 years, The Rampage has gotten to cover various topics. From lively stories such as food reviews, bands, movies, songs, foreign exchange students and more, The Rampage has also tackled tougher topics. Writers have had the challenge of writing about subjects such as suicide, drug awareness, foster care, wildfires and book bans. Overall, the articles that get written typically have a lighter undertone, but Rampage reporters must be versatile in their writing capabilities. The reporters have gotten the chance to interview and interact with many different people from many different backgrounds in a way that couldn't have otherwise happened.

The Rampage at Southeast Polk High School is a spectacular thing. It teaches people new, important skills, preserves legacies and stories forever, and provides its writers and readers with opportunities they may not be able to have anywhere else. ■

Gavin Heckler, a junior at Southeast Polk Senior High School, is the design editor for The Rampage.

STAY AHEAD academically with summer tutoring

While summer offers a welcome respite from the regular school year, it also presents a unique opportunity for students to gain an academic edge. Learning centers recognize this potential and provide tailored summer programs designed not just to prevent learning loss, but to actively propel students forward, equipping them with the skills and confidence to excel in the upcoming academic year.



One of the key ways to help students get ahead is through targeted skill enhancement in core subjects. Summer programs in reading, writing and mathematics go beyond simple review. Instead, they focus on deepening understanding, reinforcing foundational concepts, and introducing more advanced skills in an engaging manner. For instance, students strengthening their algebra skills might also get a preview of pre-calculus concepts, creating a smoother transition when the new school year begins. This proactive approach builds a stronger academic base and reduces potential

learning gaps.

Summer offerings often incorporate forward-thinking elements. Subtly introducing concepts students will encounter in the next grade level provides a significant advantage. Imagine a rising seventh grader engaging with pre-algebraic thinking through interactive activities. When these concepts are formally taught in the fall, they will already possess a foundational understanding, leading to increased confidence and comprehension. This head start can translate to better grades and a more positive learning experience.

Beyond specific subjects, a focus on cultivating crucial learning skills essential for long-term academic success is beneficial. This can include modules on study skills, organization, time management and critical thinking. These skills are transferable across all disciplines and empower students to become more effective and independent learners. A student who masters effective notetaking or learns how to break down complex problems during the summer will be better equipped to tackle challenging coursework in the future.

For students with specific academic

aspirations, such as excelling in advanced placement courses or achieving high scores on standardized tests, specialized summer preparation programs are the key. These intensive sessions provide focused instruction, targeted practice and valuable test-taking strategies, allowing students to enter the school year feeling well-prepared and confident in their abilities. This proactive approach can alleviate stress and maximize their potential for success in high-stakes academic environments.

Summer programs offer a strategic and effective way for students to gain a significant academic advantage. By focusing on targeted skill enhancement, introducing future concepts, cultivating essential learning skills, and providing personalized instruction, tutoring empowers students to not only avoid the summer slide but to move forward into the new school year with confidence, preparedness and a genuine enthusiasm for learning. ■

Information provided by Angela Jones, Owner and Center Director of Sylvan Learning of Altoona, 301 Center Place, Suite C-1, Altoona, 515-957-2923, Angela.Jones@sylvanlearning.com.




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FAX: 515-967-0842

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Monday – Friday

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Scott Duer 515-418-2227

Josh Dunwoody 515-720-8891

Jerry Evans 515-967-5136

Julie Stewart 515-967-5136

City Administrator

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City Clerk

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Police Chief

515-967-5132

Fire Chief

515-967-2216

Library Director

515-967-3881

Fax: 515-967-6934

Water Billing

515-967-5136

Building Department/ Code Enforcement

515-967-5138

Building Official

515-967-5138

Planning & Zoning Department

515-967-5136

Public Works Director

515-967-5136

RAIN BARREL WORKSHOP

Join Polk County Extension, Polk County Public Works and City of Altoona for a make and take rain barrel workshop from 5:30-7:00 PM, Thursday, May 22, 2025. Find out more at Altoona-iowa.com

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

- Benefits of rainwater harvesting
- General installation & maintenance
- Rebate programs available near you



MEMORIAL DAY

City Hall is closed for Memorial Day on Monday, May 26, 2025. Garbage, recycling, and yard waste will not be collected Monday, May 26, in observance of Memorial Day. Regular collection will be delayed one day for the remainder of the week, with Friday collection occurring on Saturday.

YARD IMPROVEMENTS? CALL BEFORE DIGGING

If your spring yard work includes any digging, please call Iowa One Call 1-800-292-8989. Iowa One Call will mark your utility lines on your property. This service is provided for free and can help you avoid planting or digging where utilities are located.

BRUSH DROP OFF

Reminder that the next opportunity to drop off brush is not until Saturday, Sept. 6 near the Public Utilities Department. Watch for more information on the city's website or social media accounts later this summer.



BATTERY DROP-OFF

Batteries can't go in your garbage or recycling cart, but that doesn't mean disposal is tricky. If it buzzes, hums, flashes, or charges, it's got a battery. That includes laptops, tablets, cell phones, children's toys, watches, power tools, wireless headphones, and even electric toothbrushes!

Loose batteries or electronics that can be charged, even if broken or no longer holding a charge, contain hazardous material and can't go in your garbage or recycling.

While batteries aren't regular garbage or recycling, there are many convenient options for you to dispose of them in a safe, smart way!

Option 1: Find a Battery Drop-Off Container Near You

To make battery disposal convenient for you, we've partnered with communities around the metro to offer battery drop-off containers. All residents are welcome to use these free drop-offs! The drop-off containers accept electronics like laptops and tablets as well as loose household batteries, including alkaline batteries (AA, AAA, etc.), button batteries, and batteries from power tools. All you have to do is bag each household battery using the bags provided at the container, then drop them in the labeled slot!

Option 2: Collection at Your Doorstep

Batteries, electronics, and a variety of other household hazardous waste can be picked up just outside your door with our Houseside Collection service. This service is available on-demand, and you only pay when you choose to use it. Once signed up, you'll receive two 12-gallon plastic bins to fill with materials and a large plastic bag for items that are too large for bins. Check out our Houseside Collection page to get started.

Option 3: Visit a Hazardous Waste Drop-Off Facility

Have a battery that won't fit in one of our drop-off containers? Have a large quantity of batteries or electronics? You can take them to our Metro Northwest Transfer Station in Grimes (by appointment only) or the Metro Hazardous Waste Drop-Off in Bondurant. Batteries are accepted free of charge (up to 75 lbs.) These locations also accept vehicle batteries, and batteries that are leaking, cracked, swollen, or defective.



2024 WATER QUALITY REPORT FOR ALTOONA WATER SUPPLY

This report contains important information regarding the water quality in our water system. The source of our water is groundwater. Our water quality testing shows the following results:

CONTAMINANT	MCL - (MCLG)	Compliance		Date	Violation	Source
		Type	Value & (Range)			
Total Trihalomethanes (ppb) [TTHM]	80 (N/A)	LRAA	28.00 (28 - 28)	09/30/2024	No	By-products of drinking water chlorination
Total Haloacetic Acids (ppb) [HAA5]	60 (N/A)	LRAA	15.00 (15 - 15)	09/30/2024	No	By-products of drinking water disinfection
Lead (ppb)	AL=15 (0)	90th	0.00 (ND - 2)	2022	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; erosion of natural deposits
Copper (ppm)	AL=1.3 (1.3)	90th	0.487 (0.0874 - 0.656)	2022	No	Corrosion of household plumbing systems; Erosion of natural deposits; Leaching from wood preservatives
950 - DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM						
Chlorine (ppm)	MRDL=4.0 (MRDLG=4.0)	RAA	1.2 (0.41 - 1.83)	12/31/2024	No	Water additive used to control microbes
01 - FINISHED WATER AT PLANT #1 (WELL #2)						
Gross Alpha, inc (pCi/L)	15 (0)	SGL	19.4	12/04/2024	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Combined Radium (pCi/L)	5 (0)	RAA	2.3 (1.53 - 3.01)	12/31/2024	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Barium (ppm)	2 (2)	SGL	0.014	05/12/2020	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4 (4)	SGL	1.4	05/12/2020	No	Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Sodium (ppm)	N/A (N/A)	SGL	150	06/20/2024	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Added to water during treatment process
Nitrate [as N] (ppm)	10 (10)	SGL	0.800	2024	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits
02 - FINISHED WATER AT PLANT #2 (WELL #3)						
Gross Alpha, inc (pCi/L)	15 (0)	SGL	19.8	12/04/2024	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Fluoride (ppm)	4 (4)	SGL	1.6	05/12/2020	No	Water additive which promotes strong teeth; Erosion of natural deposits; Discharge from fertilizer and aluminum factories
Barium (ppm)	2 (2)	SGL	0.0176	05/12/2020	No	Discharge of drilling wastes; Discharge from metal refineries; Erosion of natural deposits
Sodium (ppm)	N/A (N/A)	SGL	141	06/19/2023	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Added to water during treatment process
03 - FINISHED WATER AT PLANT #3 (WELL #4)						
Gross Alpha, inc (pCi/L)	15 (0)	SGL	12.6	12/04/2024	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Combined Radium (pCi/L)	5 (0)	RAA	2.1 (2.04 - 2.32)	12/31/2024	No	Erosion of natural deposits
Sodium (ppm)	N/A (N/A)	SGL	136	06/20/2024	No	Erosion of natural deposits; Added to water during treatment process
Nitrate [as N] (ppm)	10 (10)	SGL	0.700	2024	No	Runoff from fertilizer use; Leaching from septic tanks, sewage; Erosion of natural deposits

Note: Contaminants with dates indicate results from the most recent testing done in accordance with regulations.

DEFINITIONS

- Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL) – The highest level of a contaminant that is allowed in drinking water. MCLs are set as close to the MCLGs as feasible using the best available treatment technology.
- Maximum Contaminant Level Goal (MCLG) -- The level of a contaminant in drinking water below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MCLGs allow for a margin of safety.
- ppb -- parts per billion.
- ppm -- parts per million.
- pCi/L – picocuries per liter
- N/A – Not applicable
- ND -- Not detected
- RAA – Running Annual Average
- Treatment Technique (TT) – A required process intended to reduce the level of a contaminant in drinking water.
- Action Level (AL) – The concentration of a contaminant which, if exceeded, triggers treatment or other requirements which a water system must follow.
- Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level Goal (MRDLG) - The level of a drinking water disinfectant below which there is no known or expected risk to health. MRDLGs

do not reflect the benefits of the use of disinfectants to control microbial contaminants.

- Maximum Residual Disinfectant Level (MRDL) - The highest level of a disinfectant allowed in drinking water. There is convincing evidence that addition of a disinfectant is necessary for control of microbial contaminants.
- SGL – Single Sample Result
- RTCR – Revised Total Coliform Rule
- NTU – Nephelometric Turbidity Units

GENERAL INFORMATION

Drinking water, including bottled water, may reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that water posed a health risk. More information about contaminants or potential health effects can be obtained by calling the Environmental Protection Agency's Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

Some people may be more vulnerable to contaminants in drinking water than the general population. Immuno-compromised persons such as persons with cancer undergoing chemotherapy, persons who have undergone

organ transplants, people with HIV/AIDS or other immune system disorders, some elderly, and infants can be particularly at risk from infections. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. EPA/CDC guidelines on appropriate means to lessen the risk of infection by Cryptosporidium and other microbial contaminants are available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline (800-426-4791).

If present, elevated levels of lead can cause serious health problems, especially for pregnant women and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and components associated with service lines and home plumbing. ALTOONA WATER SUPPLY is responsible for providing high quality drinking water, but cannot control the variety of materials used in plumbing components. When your water has been sitting for several hours, you can minimize the potential for lead exposure by flushing your tap for 30 seconds to 2 minutes before using water for drinking or cooking. If you are concerned about lead in your water, you may wish to have your water tested. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available from the Safe Drinking Water Hotline or at <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/lead>.

Our water supply has completed a service line inventory. Please contact us for information regarding the inventory and how you can access the results.

SOURCE WATER ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

This water supply obtains its water from the sandstone and dolomite of the Cambrian-Ordovician aquifer. The Cambrian-Ordovician aquifer was determined to have low susceptibility to contamination because the characteristics of the aquifer and overlying materials provide natural protection from contaminants at the land surface. The Cambrian-Ordovician wells will have low susceptibility to surface contaminants such as leaking underground storage tanks, contaminant spills, and excess fertilizer application. A detailed evaluation of your source water was completed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and is available from the Water Operator at 515-967-4464 .

CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions regarding this information or how you can get involved in decisions regarding the water system, please contact ALTOONA WATER SUPPLY at 515-967-4464.

Be sure to check for cancelations.

Coming up in the Altoona Living magazine:

Cancer Survivors: In June, we will be sharing the stories of cancer survivors. If you would be willing to share your experiences about how overcoming cancer has impacted your life, please email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.

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.

Music At The Park

Sundays, May 25, June 29, July 27, Aug. 24, 6-8 p.m.
Haines Park Outdoor Stage,
700 Block of Third Ave. S.E.,
Altoona

Enjoy free summer concerts along with pop and popcorn to be sold by CAP Theatre.

Altoona City Wide Garage Sales

Thursday, May 22 - Saturday, May 24
Thursday, June 12 - Saturday, June 14
Thursday, July 10 - Saturday, July 12



Brightside Aleworks events

480 Center Place, Altoona

- **Bingo Night**, Wednesday, May 28, 6-8 p.m.
- **Brightside Market**, every Thursday through Aug. 28, 5-8 p.m.
- **Adult Coloring Night**, Thursday, May 29, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Healing Hearts Grief Support

Meets every second and fourth Tuesday of each month
Edencrest at Tuscany, 1600 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona, lower east entrance

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

Cheers to 4 Years of Edencrest at Tuscany

Wednesday, May 28, 4-7 p.m.
1600 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona
The public is invited to a celebration to commemorate four wonderful years of growth and community at Edencrest at Tuscany. Farm Boys BBQ food truck will be on site. Kids can enjoy a bounce house, and live music by Tom Hofer begins at 5:30 p.m. Raffle prizes will be awarded.



Memorial Day Event

Monday, May 26, 10 a.m.
Enabling Garden Memorial, 1050 First Ave. S., Altoona

Most Memorial Day ceremonies are held at cemeteries where the fallen veterans are interred. Neither of Altoona's cemeteries have a dedicated military memorial for the "unknown" soldier. The Altoona American Legion Post 682 approved holding a memorial service on Memorial Day at the Enabling Garden Memorial as a more respectful place for a ceremony. Post 682 has a program that has memorial bricks of service members already in place in the memorial and will be adding more this summer.

The program will include a color guard, honor/firing squad, a short presentation by the Post 682 chaplain, a laying of a wreath at the base of a memorial which will include a rifle salute, playing of Taps, and the Honor and Color guards. There is consideration of reading the names of the fallen veterans in our cemeteries (that we know about) prior to the salute and possible instrumental accompaniment.

Any veterans with a full military uniform are also welcomed to participate with Post 682. A prior notification is appreciated or just show up in uniform prior to the program.



Holy Smoke Backyard BBQ Competition and Car Show

Saturday, June 7, 1-6 p.m.
Rising Sun Church of Christ,
6390 N.E. Rising Sun Drive,
Pleasant Hill

Car show from 1-6 p.m., BBQ samples from 4-6 p.m.

Tai Chi Class at The Tuscany

Every Thursday from 9:45-10:30 a.m. until June 5
Edencrest at Tuscany, 1600 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona, lower east entrance

Tai chi is an ancient Chinese exercise program to promote strength, flexibility and balance. Individuals will learn warm-up, cool-down, six basic forms and six advanced forms, with modifications available for those who need to remain seated for all or most of the class. Classes offered on a contribution basis for those age 60 and older. For those younger than 60, there is a \$4 charge. All donations go to Aging Resources of Central Iowa, a non-profit agency serving older adults in central Iowa.

Bankers Trust Altoona Customer Appreciation Event

Thursday, June 12,
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
3820 Eighth St. S.W. ■



SE POLK RAMS

SUMMER 2025

IOWA
Living
MAGAZINES

SPORTS SCHEDULE

V BASEBALL

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
May 19	5:00PM	ADM	ADM High School
May 21	5:00PM	Des Moines Roosevelt	Southeast Polk High School
May 22	5:00PM	Ames	Southeast Polk High School
May 24	12:00PM	Kennedy	Cedar Rapids Kennedy High School
May 24	3:00PM	Iowa City (High)	Mt. Mercy Athletic Complex
May 28	7:00PM	Urbandale	Southeast Polk High School
May 30	5:00PM	Carlisle	Southeast Polk Junior High School
May 31	10:00AM	Council Bluffs Lincoln	Southeast Polk High School
Jun 2	7:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic High School
Jun 4	5:00PM	Ankeny Centennial	Ankeny Centennial High School
Jun 5	5:00PM	Ankeny (DH)	Southeast Polk High School
Jun 9	5:00PM	WDM Valley	Southeast Polk High School
Jun 11	7:00PM	Johnston	Johnston Middle School
Jun 12	5:00PM	Waukee	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jun 14	4:30PM	Multiple Schools	Harlan Rogers Sports Complex
Jun 16	7:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Southeast Polk High School
Jun 18	5:00PM	Urbandale	Urbandale High School
Jun 23	7:00PM	Ankeny Centennial	Southeast Polk High School
Jun 25	5:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Southeast Polk High School
Jun 26	7:00PM	Ankeny High School	Ankeny High School
Jun 30	5:00PM	Johnston (DH)	Southeast Polk High School
Jul 2	7:00PM	WDM Valley	Valley High School
Jul 3	7:00PM	Waukee	Southeast Polk High School
Jul 7	5:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Waukee Northwest High School
Jul 8	5:00PM	Ottumwa	Ottumwa High School

V SOFTBALL

DATE	TIME	OPPONENT	LOCATION
May 27	7:15PM	Carlisle	Southeast Polk Junior High School
May 28	7:00PM	Urbandale	Southeast Polk High School
May 29	7:00PM	Norwalk	Norwalk High School
May 30	7:15PM	Indianola	Indianola High School
Jun 2	7:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Dowling Catholic High School
Jun 4	5:00PM	Ankeny Centennial	Ankeny Centennial High School
Jun 5	5:00PM	Ankeny High School	Southeast Polk High School
Jun 7	11:00AM	Multiple Schools	Des Moines Softball Complex
Jun 9	5:00PM	WDM Valley	Southeast Polk High School
Jun 11	7:00PM	Johnston	Johnston Middle School
Jun 12	5:00PM	Waukee	Waukee Baseball/Softball Complex
Jun 13	10:45AM	TBD	Cedar Rapids Jefferson High School
Jun 14	12:30PM	TBD	Cedar Rapids Jefferson High School
Jun 16	7:00PM	Waukee Northwest	Southeast Polk High School
Jun 18	5:00PM	Urbandale	Urbandale High School
Jun 20	1:15PM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 21	9:00AM	Multiple Schools	Waukee Northwest High School
Jun 23	7:00PM	Ankeny Centennial	Southeast Polk High School
Jun 25	5:00PM	Dowling Catholic	Southeast Polk High School
Jun 26	7:00PM	Ankeny High School	Ankeny High School
Jun 30	5:00PM	Johnston (DH)	Southeast Polk High School
Jul 1	7:30PM	Dallas Center-Grimes	Dallas Center-Grimes High School
Jul 2	7:00PM	WDM Valley	Valley High School
Jul 3	7:00PM	Waukee	Southeast Polk High School
Jul 7	5:00PM	Waukee Northwest (DH)	Waukee Northwest High School
Jul 8	5:00PM	Ames	Southeast Polk Junior High School
Jul 9	7:00PM	ADM	Southeast Polk Junior High School

GOOD LUCK ON YOUR SEASON!

FOR ALL SEP RAMS SCHEDULES

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



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WELLNESS

By Tricia Heberer

VITAMIN C benefits for skin

1. Superior absorption and efficacy: Formulated with stabilized L-ascorbic acid or advanced derivatives for better penetration. Often combined with complementary ingredients to enhance effectiveness.

2. Longer-lasting antioxidant protection: Medical-grade serums provide prolonged protection against UV damage, pollution and blue light exposure. Reduces oxidative stress more efficiently than drugstore versions.

3. More potent anti-aging effects/boosts collagen production: Higher concentration (typically 10-20% vitamin C) ensures faster collagen production and wrinkle reduction. Firms skin more effectively.

4. Brightens skin and more effective hyperpigmentation and scar treatment: Targets stubborn melasma, post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation (PIH), and acne scars with clinical-grade formulations. Visible results faster compared to lower-grade serums. Evens out skin tone.

5. Enhanced skin barrier and hydration.

6. Reduces redness and inflammation: Soothes irritated skin and helps with conditions like rosacea. Strengthens the skin barrier.

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.

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HEALTH

By Dr. Kari Swain and Dr. Elizabeth Ellrich

FAMILY summer bucket list

Summer offers the perfect opportunity for families to prioritize health, wellness and growth together. Creating a summer bucket list helps families bond while developing healthy habits that can last well beyond the summer months. A thoughtfully designed summer bucket list helps create memories while also reducing screen time naturally and fostering physical and mental wellness.

Start by gathering as a family to brainstorm activities everyone would enjoy, balancing active adventures with restorative experiences. Keep your list manageable; quality experiences matter more than quantity. Keep the activities simple. Breaking them down into categories like these is a good way to start.

• **Health and movement:** Enjoy family bike rides, hikes, walks, swimming pools, splash pads, backyard obstacle courses, yoga, stretching.

• **Nutrition adventures:** Visit farmers markets or try new produce, plant a small garden, try new recipes, go berry picking at a local farm.

• **Mental wellness:** Start a family gratitude practice, take “unplugged” days without screens, practice deep-breathing exercises.

• **Sensory activities:** Use Play-Doh, water play, sandbox, and finger painting.

• **Creative projects:** Make nature crafts from outdoor treasures, learn something new together (stargazing, bird identification), create a family mural or art project, build something as a team.

Leave plenty of time for unscheduled play, too. Kids need opportunities to simply play and use their imagination. Free time and boredom foster creativity and problem solving. The focus shouldn't be about checking things off the list, but about savoring summer with meaningful activities and family time. ■

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

WELLNESS

By Nikki Morgan

UNLOCKING the power of light

Light therapy has become a popular, non-invasive way to support healthy skin and overall wellness. Using specific wavelengths of light, this treatment can target skin concerns at the cellular level — without downtime or discomfort. Here's how red, green and blue light therapy each work their magic:



Red light therapy (630–660nm) penetrates deep into the skin to boost collagen production, reduce inflammation and stimulate cell repair. It is ideal for reducing the appearance of fine lines, wrinkles and scarring while promoting a healthy, radiant glow. Many people find it also helps with joint pain and muscle recovery.

Green light therapy (520–560nm) targets skin pigmentation and discoloration. It's a gentle solution for fading age spots, sun damage and redness from broken capillaries. Green light calms the skin and helps even out tone, making it a go-to for those with sensitive or blotchy complexions.

Blue light therapy (405–470nm) is best known for fighting acne. It works by killing acne-causing bacteria and reducing oil production, helping to clear existing breakouts and prevent future ones. Because it also has anti-inflammatory properties, it can soothe irritated skin as it heals.

Whether used individually or combined in treatment sessions, light therapy is a safe, painless way to improve skin health and appearance over time. Always consult a qualified provider to determine the best light therapy plan for your skin type and goals. ■

Information provided by Nikki Morgan, DNP, ARNP, SkinFusion, 200 Second St. S.E., Altoona, 515-967-0587, www.skinfusionfx.com, nikki.skinfusionfx@gmail.com

HEALTH

By Ashley Powell

NATURAL solutions for chronic pain

Chronic pain can make daily life difficult, but natural remedies like CBD, THC and alkaloids offer effective relief without the risks of traditional medications. CBD interacts with the body's endocannabinoid system to help reduce inflammation and pain. Research shows it may ease conditions like arthritis, muscle soreness and nerve pain. Unlike pharmaceuticals, CBD is non-addictive and has minimal side effects.



THC, in low doses, can also aid in pain management by altering pain perception and improving relaxation. Additionally, THC helps reduce stress and anxiety, which often accompany chronic pain, leading to an overall improved sense of well-being.

Natural alkaloids, such as those found in kratom, provide another layer of relief. These compounds interact with pain receptors while also promoting energy and mood stability. This makes them particularly beneficial for individuals struggling with both physical discomfort and the mental fatigue that chronic pain can bring.

While online shopping may seem convenient, purchasing from a locally owned CBD store ensures you receive high-quality, third-party-tested products. Certified hemp consultants can guide you to the best pain relief options, including tinctures, topicals and capsules to fit for your needs.

If you're looking for safe and effective pain relief, visit your local CBD store for expert advice and trusted products. ■

Information provided by Ashley Powell, CBD American Shaman, 800 S. 50th St., No. 106, West Des Moines, 515-380-5251, and 3418 Eighth St. S.W., No. 3, Altoona, 515-967-4036. Sources: Ueberall, M. A. (2020). "Effectiveness and Tolerability of THC: CBD Extracts in Chronic Pain Patients." *Journal of Pain Research*.

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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 Mary Simon, VP, Altoona Branch Manager, 3820 Eighth St. S.W., Altoona, 515-245-5480, MSimon@BankersTrust.com. Bankers Trust NMLS ID: 440379.



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

LIBRARY

ALTOONA Public Library news

Looking for something to do this summer? The library is the best place for free activities and reading challenges for all ages, starting May 31. Find out more at altoonalibrary.com.

Summer Reading Rainbow

Run – all ages, Saturday, May 31 at 10 a.m. or 10:30 a.m. Run or walk your way along the trail by the library; come wearing white and see how colorful you can get. We'll be handing out library swag to participants completing the mile-long route. Registration is required.

Adult programming – ages 18 and older

• **Illuminating Design: Acrylic Nightlights**, Thursday, June 12 at 6 p.m. Design and create a custom acrylic nightlight using the Glowforge. Whether for home decor, gifts or personal expression, this workshop fosters creativity and technical skills in a fun and engaging environment. Registration required.

• **Bullet Journaling**, Wednesday, June 18 at 6 p.m. Learn to create your own bullet journal. Whether you're new to journaling or looking to refresh your routine, you'll learn the basics of setting up your own bullet journal, explore layout ideas, and discover how to track habits, goals and more. Registration required.

• **Puzzle and Game Swap**, Saturday, June 28 from 1-3 p.m. Are your puzzles and games becoming ho-hum? Swap them out. Bring items to be swapped to the front desk June 20-27 (during regular library hours) to receive a voucher and get first access to the swap on June 28. During the swap, you can use your vouchers from 1-2 p.m. From 2-3 p.m., anyone can stop by. No registration required.

Children's programming

• **Meet a Raptor**, Tuesday, June 17 from 4-5:30 p.m. SOAR is coming to the library. Stop by to learn about birds of prey and see them in action. Grades preK-6. No registration required.

• **Zoom, Zoom, Zoom**, Tuesday, June 24 from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Drop in to play with marble runs, race cars and more. Ages 12 and younger. No registration required.

• **Pokémon Club**, Thursday, June 26, from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Pokémon fans, stop by for themed crafts, activities and games. Show off your cards, play or chat with other fans. Grades K-6. No registration required.

Teen programming (grades 6-12)

• **Nano Tape Crafts**, Monday, June 9, from 3-4 p.m. You've seen it all over social media. Stop by the library to make nano tape crafts. We'll have supplies and instructions ready to make squishies, cubes and other smoochy goodies. No registration required.

• **Lego Mini Golf**, Thursday, June 26, from 6-7 p.m. Build your ultimate mini golf course. Create as many obstacles, twists and turns as you can come up with. At the end of the program, we'll play a round at all the courses. No registration required.

• **Messy Science**, Monday, June 30, from 6-7 p.m. Get messy for science. We'll have experiments set up for you to try that will amaze and delight — and make a mess. No registration required.

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

Altoona Public Library

700 Eighth St. S.W., Altoona
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FAITH

By Nathan Anenson

WHY did God let it happen?



I've seen heartbreaking tragedies in the lives of those around me: a difficult divorce, the loss of a job, the death of a child. When I broaden my view, I see war, disease, violence and countless other accounts of human suffering. There's a question that can surface in the face of pain: Why did God let it happen?

If you've wondered, "Why did God let it happen?" you're not alone. In fact, you are in pretty good company. We find it throughout the Bible: Jeremiah, David, even Jesus. When Jesus was hanging on the cross, he cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15:34). Jesus, the perfect Son of God, with his final words, asks, Why God? Why are you letting this happen? If Jesus can ask this question, so can we.

It's an important question to ask. When we bring our pain and questions to God, we discover a more honest and authentic relationship with God. We find we can be real, and God doesn't leave us.

When we ask God, "Why?" there are not easy answers. In fact, in all those Biblical examples above, God never gave a direct answer. And so, I don't have one either. But I do know two things.

I know God is going to make everything right. God has a plan to restore all things, including you. He's not going to leave you where you are. His plan is centered on Jesus, who came 2,000 years ago to die for our sins and conquer death. When He returns to complete the plan, "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." And then Jesus promised, "I will make everything new!" (Revelation 21:4-5). This is our hope. Today is not right, but one day it will be.

I know God is with you. When you sit at the bottom of the deepest and darkest pit, Jesus is there. It may feel like God is far away and doesn't care. However, the cross of Christ says something different. The cross says Jesus took on our sin, despair, death and brokenness to the fullest extent. Jesus completely identified with our suffering so He could be with us in our suffering. Jesus enters into your depression, into your cancer, into your broken relationship, into your death and says, I. AM. HERE. Jesus suffered so you would never be separated from God's love.


I don't know the answer to the "why." But I know God's promises. When you wrestle with the "why," I pray your questions lead you to the One who is with you and will make everything right. ■

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



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CELEBRATING May

A tribute to mothers and the power of love

As spring blossoms in full, May brings with it a spirit of renewal, warmth and heartfelt appreciation. It's a month filled with beauty — and, perhaps most meaningfully, a time to pause and reflect on the immeasurable love and devotion of mothers and maternal figures in our lives.

Mother's Day, nestled gently in the heart of May, is more than just a calendar date. It's a celebration of the women who have nurtured, guided and shaped us — often through quiet sacrifice and tireless devotion. Whether through gentle guidance, unwavering support or the strength to carry others even while tired herself, a mother's love is unlike any other. This month, we recognize not only biological mothers but also grandmothers, adoptive moms, mentors, aunts and all maternal figures who have given us a sense of belonging and love.

"A mother is she who can take the place of all others but whose place no one else can take." — Cardinal Meymillod

Let us also remember those for whom Mother's Day is a tender time — those who carry the memory of a mother in their hearts, those who yearn for children, or those who have filled maternal roles without the title. May brings space for both celebration and remembrance.

So, as the days grow warmer and brighter, may we all take time to show our appreciation — to celebrate the unconditional love, strength and selflessness that define motherhood in all its forms. A heartfelt note, a shared memory, a simple "thank you" — these small gestures carry the weight of genuine love and recognition.

Happy Mother's Day to all the incredible moms and mother figures out there. We see you. We thank you. We celebrate you. ■

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



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OUT & ABOUT



Altoona Area Chamber and Pleasant Hill Chamber of Commerce jointly celebrated Keystone Savings Bank's 90 years with a ribbon cutting on April 25.



Ellie Garringer, Chris Eaton and Travis Armstrong at the ribbon cutting to celebrate Keystone Savings Bank's 90 years on April 25.



Jake Schilling, Bryan Gordon, Erin Carter and Doug Benjamin at the ribbon cutting to celebrate Keystone Savings Bank's 90 years on April 25.



Tracy Parker, Kody Hinton and Marta McCauley at the ribbon cutting to celebrate Keystone Savings Bank's 90 years on April 25.



Brett McAllister accepts the Residents' Choice certificates for Fireside Grille.



Ali Hansen accepts the Residents' Choice certificates for Pat Barton Dance Studio.



Sarah Rowe accepts the Residents' Choice certificates for Johnny's Italian Steakhouse.



Melissa Horton and Kennedy Wilson accept the Residents' Choice certificates for the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce.



Nikki Morgan, Alyssa McCarl, Jacie Mitchell and Ellie Lessard at the Perk Before Work hosted by SkinFusion Integrated Aesthetics on May 6.



Linda Lawson and Tammy Jones Christensen at the Perk Before Work hosted by SkinFusion Integrated Aesthetics on May 6.



Rob Cramer and Craig Buma at the Perk Before Work hosted by SkinFusion Integrated Aesthetics on May 6.

OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON Cutting

Altoona Area Chamber and Pleasant Hill Chamber of Commerce jointly held a ribbon cutting for SkinFusion Integrated Aesthetics on April 24.



Nikki and Mike Morgan



Gretchen Ginter, Desiree Dennis and Melea Reed



Jacie Mitchell and Ellie Lessard



Mary Simon, Rick Kroeger and Garrett Birkett



Jared Vincent, Shelly Eddy, Liv Dowling and Kelly Lamb



Alyssa McCarl and Betty Curtis-Miles



Ellie Moats



Loral Rainey and Angela Jones



Lori McCarl and Heidi Kline

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AGENT HIGHLIGHT MARK VANDER TUIG

OUTSTANDING CITIZEN OF THE YEAR!

If you've lived in the southeast Polk community very long, you've run into this person along the way. Whether it's at a networking event, making an important decision about where to live, learning important tools for a successful relationship, or maybe even a jam session. Mark Vander Tuig doesn't sit still for very long, needs LOTS of coffee, loves a sense of humor, and is passionate about servanthood leadership. He is a resource to congregational leaders and pastors, hoping to help them to catch the vision of the Great Commission. He most likely also loves earning a commission when he helps families find the right home, in the right neighborhood as an agent for PCA Real Estate.

Mark is most likely remembered as the Senior Pastor at Lutheran Church of the Cross. Under Mark's leadership, the church grew from 114 members in 1990 to over 1,000 by 2009. This growth was more than just numbers; it was lives changed, faith deepened, and a church that became one of the cornerstones of the community. Through outreach events like "Jammin' for Jesus," countless building expansions, and over 700 weddings and 250 funerals, Mark's influence touched the most joyous and sorrowful moments of life with compassion, wisdom, and faith. In 2010, Mark would retire from LCC to lead an association of over 1,000 churches in 18 different countries.

We would like to thank Mark and his dedication to The PCA team, and our community!