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WELCOME

AIRING of grievances and feats of strength

"A Festivus for the rest of us." If you watched the popular TV show "Seinfeld" in the late 1990s, you are smiling right now. If you didn't watch the show, well, read on, as you can still smile.

Festivus was depicted on "Seinfeld" as a Dec. 23 holiday that includes a Festivus dinner, an aluminum Festivus pole, practices such as the "airing of grievances" and "feats of strength," and the labeling of explainable events as "Festivus miracles." It's a Costanza tradition.

Every time I hear the word "festival," I think of "Festivus." And, this time of year in Iowa, festivals are aplenty. For several decades now, Jolene and I have been traveling to various communities in our great state to partake in their wonderful community festivals, including the one we write about in this month's cover story.

Do these others sound familiar to you? Tulip Time in Pella. Mac and Cheese Festival in Dubuque. John Wayne Birthday Celebration in Winterset. Scandinavian Days in Story City. Bell Tower Festival in Jefferson. Good Egg Days in Stuart. Ice Cream Days in Le Mars. RibFest in Sioux City. Four Seasons Festival in Polk City. Truckers Jamboree in Walcott. Beef Days in Solon. National Balloon Classic in Indianola. Watermelon Days in Newell. Hobo Days in Britt. Pufferbilly Days in Boone. And, not to be left out, the Testicle Festival at Appleberry Orchard in Donnellson.

The list goes on. And on. If there is one thing we Iowans know how to do, it is how to throw a community festival.

Many of the festivals have similarities. Some focus on food. Others on drink. Many include music. But they all have at least one unique selling point that makes them truly stand out.

My dad would take me to festivals around our hometown when I was a kid, whether I wanted to go or not. He enjoyed connecting with people and reminiscing about days gone by — the same things I do today.

When it comes down to it, though, all of our community festivals are about wholesome fun — with or without the Festivus pole.

Have a great month, and thanks for reading. ■

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Celebrate NORWALK

Enjoy the Fourth of July with a hometown parade and fireworks

By Rachel Harrington

Norwalk has a history of hosting one of the larger Fourth of July parades in central Iowa. This year, residents will once again celebrate the national holiday with a flourish of red, white and blue, a grand parade and fireworks. The events are sponsored by Norwalk Hometown Pride and the Lions Club.

Lions Club volunteers JD Dagenais, Bobbi Davis, Chuck Clark and Tom Riggs help set up the Fourth of July fireworks display.

FEATURE

The Fourth of July parade is organized by Norwalk Hometown Pride. Jackson Zeigler, co-vice chair of the community organization, along with Chair Tina Robinson, has worked diligently over the past two months.

"I've helped plan the whole thing and am currently working on marketing," Zeigler says.

Unlike years past, this year's Fourth of July festivities have been scaled back to only the parade and fireworks. Other festival activities are not being held.

"Since we're only doing the parade this year, the process has been fairly simple," Zeigler says. "We've pushed out the parade registration link to the community, and those interested can sign up."

Though Norwalk Hometown Pride isn't planning as many activities due to a lack of volunteers, that fact isn't slowing them down from taking great efforts to make the parade an event to remember, and they welcome any and all who would like to join the organization to help them achieve their goals to improve the community and celebrate it.

Last year, Norwalk's Fourth of July parade boasted around 100 floats, and the

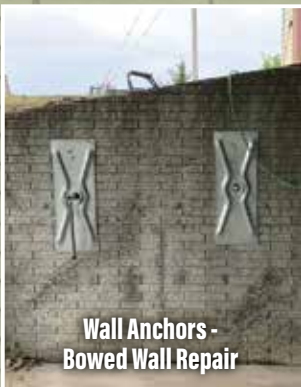


A variety of parade entries are featured in the Norwalk Fourth of July Parade, put on by Hometown Pride.

same is anticipated for this year. This year's grand marshal is Norwalk's 2024 Citizen of the Year, Robin Leaper. The registration fee for the parade is \$10 plus an extra \$5 for each additional car. Those interested in

participating in the parade have until July 2 to sign up and can do so through the link on Norwalk Hometown Pride's website, www.norwalkhometownpride.org. Nonprofit groups that would like to be in the parade can reach

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The community gathers for one of the area's longest hometown Fourth of July parades.

out to Zeigler at jacksonhometownpride@gmail.com to have their registration fees waived. The host organization plans to have a float that celebrates Music Fest, with organizers hoping to have a live band on the float.

"All registration proceeds go to Norwalk Hometown Pride to beautify our community and work on current and future community projects," Zieger says.

Chad Smith will be helping parade entries line up at the high school the morning of the parade. Parade participants who would like a spot closer to the beginning of the parade should consider arriving earlier in the morning. All participants are encouraged to arrive around 8 a.m. The parade will begin at 10 a.m.

"The parade route will be altered somewhat this year since much of Main Street will be closed off to have water main work done," Zeigler shares. "However, it will still begin and end at Norwalk High School."

The route may still cross Main Street, though that will be determined closer to the big day. The final route will be shared on the Hometown Pride website. Zeigler states he looks forward to a big parade where the community can get together — whether to showcase a float or their business or simply to celebrate our nation's independence.

Fireworks show

The parade may help kick off the Fourth of July weekend, but it isn't the end of the festivities. The Norwalk Lions Club oversees the fireworks show, which happens after dusk on the night of July 4. J.D. Dagenais is the Norwalk Lions Club president, and he has helped with the fireworks show for 24 of the last 25 years.

Dagenais says the fireworks show is a three-day process.

"On July 3, our vendor drops off our mortars," he shares. "Our Lions Club team cleans them out from their last uses to make

sure there is no previous debris. Then we attach them to one another for stability and to make sure none of them will fall over and launch fireworks any direction we don't want them to go. Then we set them up."

The day of the show, Dagenais shows up at McAninch Park, the launch site, around noon to be sure everything is ready to go. Around 7 p.m., he and his crew get the mortars wired up and ready to go. At dusk, the show begins and lasts roughly 25-35 minutes.

"It's documented that people can't pay attention longer than that to a fireworks show," Dagenais shares.

On July 5, Dagenais gets up bright and early to get things cleaned up.

"The mortars have two fuses that help them to explode properly. Sometimes, one of the fuses fails to go off. That's why we don't like people to be in the drop zone," he states. "They can still be dangerous."

The Lions Club has been hard at work

FEATURE

fundraising for an amazing upcoming Fourth of July fireworks show. Community members will find donation buckets around town where they can support the show. The Lions Club is also selling raffle tickets. The community has been responsive, and the club appreciates the community's support.

The Lions Club will have a truck in the parade and will be throwing candy to parade-goers. The club hopes to bring awareness to some of the community projects members do including Kid Sight, pancake breakfast, shrimp and lobster feed, Meals on Wheels, the food pantry, lunch in the park and much more.

The Lions Club is looking for the next generation to join them and help support and promote the Norwalk community. Organizers hope that, with more volunteers, future community events can feature additional fun such as games, bands, etc. They hope to see a strong turnout to celebrate the national holiday together. The community is invited to bring chairs and blankets to McAninch Park to watch the fireworks light up the night sky for the Fourth of July. ■



Garrett Gobble prepares fireworks for the Lions Club display.

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LEGAL By Ken Winjum

UNDERSTANDING the Hearsay Rule



In our daily lives, we naturally recognize that information directly from the source is more reliable than what has been obtained second hand. Consistent with this, the “hearsay rule” has a long history in the common law as it pertains to evidence.

Although the term “hearsay” may be used in casual conversation, it actually has a very specific definition in the law. Iowa Rule of Evidence 5.801 provides that “hearsay” means a statement that:

1. The declarant does not make while testifying at the current trial or hearing; and
2. A party offers into evidence to prove the truth of the matter asserted in the statement.

Under Iowa Rule of Evidence 5.802, hearsay is not admissible as evidence (unless the Constitution, a statute or Supreme Court rule provide otherwise).

If only it were so simple. As it turns out, there are at least two types of such statements (mostly used in cross examination) which are defined as not being hearsay and numerous exceptions to the rule.

Iowa Rule of Evidence 5.803 contains 24 numbered exceptions to the hearsay rule which apply regardless of whether the declarant is available as a witness. Rule 5.804 contains five additional exceptions if the declarant is unavailable as a witness. Finally, Rule 5.807 contains a “residual exception” which allows hearsay where it is supported by sufficient guarantees of trustworthiness (after considering the totality of the circumstances), and it is more probative on the point for which it is offered than any other evidence the proponent can obtain through reasonable efforts.

Given the complexity of the rule and its exceptions, law school evidence courses devote much attention and time to this subject. A few of the common law exceptions which are adopted by the Iowa Rules of Evidence include:

1. Present sense impression (statement made at time of perceiving something).
2. Excited utterance (relating to a startling event while under stress of event).
3. Then-existing mental, emotional or physical conditions.
4. Statement made for medical diagnosis or treatment.
5. Former testimony.
6. Statement under belief of imminent death (also known as “dying declaration”).

Each of these (and the numerous other exceptions) have specific definitions and requirements for them to apply. The Iowa Supreme Court has observed that, in determining whether hearsay is admissible, it looks at the true purpose using an objective finding based on the facts and circumstances developed by the record. See *Hawkins v. Grinnell Regional*, 929 N.W.2d 261 (Iowa 2019).

The Hearsay Rule exists to make sure that evidence presented at trial is reliable. Toward that end, as a general rule, the testimony should be made in court so that the witness is subject to cross examination. Of course, many exceptions apply. ■

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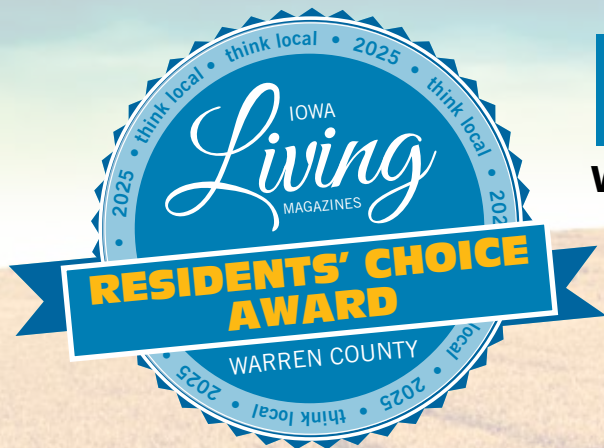
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Information provided by Ken Winjum, The Winjum Law Firm, P.L.C.,
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See rules and vote at www.iowalivingmagazines.com/residentpoll. One vote per resident, please.

FOOD AND DRINK

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

AUTO BODY

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

COMMUNITY

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

SHOPPING

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

ENTERTAINMENT

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

HEALTH/BEAUTY

- Hair Salon
- Health Clinic
- Dental Office
- Orthodontist Office
- Mental Health Services
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TRANSFERRING insurance

We all know how stressful moving can be. There is a massive list of tasks to perform. It is no surprise that making new insurance arrangements might not jump out as your first priority. But do yourself a favor: Don't wait. The process isn't as rough as it seems. Below are a few key questions to investigate about moving any insurance. They don't cover everything, but they should get you going in the right direction.



Have you talked to your agent?

If you're happy with your insurance company, give your agent a call. Your agent should be able to tell you whether you'll need to find a new agent and how to transfer your policies to your new address.

What about new insurance or transferring insurance?

Talking with an agent is the best way to find out what you will need to do to get new insurance or transfer your insurance to your new address. Your agent will also help you understand insurance requirements in your new location.

If you're moving between states, keep in mind that insurance coverage varies across states. For example, in California, due to the high frequency of earthquakes, you need to take special precautions to make

sure your home is safe and secure in case an earthquake occurs. That's not the case in Indiana. Different states also have different auto insurance laws, and if you're moving to a new state, you'll need a new auto insurance policy, plain and simple. Most state laws require you to have homeowner's insurance before you even buy a home.

Are your possessions covered while you're moving?

Depending on how you've chosen to move — hired movers, rental truck, a portable container or DIY in the back of your old Honda — your property may or may not be covered between the time it leaves your home and arrives at its final destination. Some homeowner policies will cover your property everywhere, regardless of whether it is in your home or a moving truck.

Other policies will not cover anything once it is out of your door. So, double check your policy or call your agent. If your insurance policy won't cover your property, you can get coverage through the moving company. By federal law, moving companies have to offer supplemental insurance for your property that will include a set percentage of replacement costs, but you'll need to increase that amount to get full coverage. ■

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MID-YEAR money check

Reassessing your 2025 financial goals

As the temperature heats up, and summer slows us down just a bit, it's the perfect time to take a step back and ask yourself: Am I still on track with my 2025 financial goals?

Half of the year is gone. When driving through our bank's communities, you'll notice school is wrapping up and kids' activities are ramping up. If you're coaching youth sports, supporting from the sideline, or juggling summer travel plans, it's important to step back and reflect on the first half of the year's finances. A mid-year financial check-in can help you course-correct, celebrate wins, and set yourself up for a strong finish to the year.



Here's a step-by-step guide to reassessing your goals without the stress:

1. Review the goals you set in January: Start by pulling out that vision board, spreadsheet or list you made at the start of the year. Ask yourself: Which goals have I accomplished or made progress on? Which goals have stalled? Do any goals no longer align with my current priorities? Am I on track to reach my end goal of retirement?

Life changes — jobs shift, families grow, markets move. A goal that felt urgent in January might not be relevant in June, and that's OK.

2. Track your financial progress: Here's where numbers meet reality. Evaluate your progress in key areas.

- Savings: Roth and Traditional IRA annual limits: \$7,000 with \$1,000 catch up. Annual 401(k) limit \$23,500; additional \$7,500 ages 50 and older; additional \$11,250 if 60-63.

- Debt payoff: Are you ahead, behind or right on schedule? Pay off high-interest credit card debt.

- Spending habits: Have you stayed within your budget? Use budgeting tools, bank statements, or even a good old-fashioned spreadsheet to get a clear view.

3. Adjust for life's curveballs: Maybe you faced unexpected expenses or got a raise (congrats!). Use this time to recalculate: Can you increase your savings rate? Do you need to reduce extra spending to stay on track? Should you reprioritize a goal — for example, pause after-tax investment account savings to pay off credit card debt?

Remember: progress over perfection.

Final thoughts: Money management isn't about perfection — it's about progress. A mid-year reassessment isn't a judgment session; it's a realignment. If you've drifted off course in your investment strategy, now is the time to rebalance and reevaluate. 2025 isn't over yet — and neither is your financial journey. ■

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WHO SHOULD GET VACCINATED?

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Source: cdc.gov 4/25

IS IT TIME to consider assisted living for a loved one?

Recognizing the signs

Determining when a loved one may need assisted living can be one of the most emotional and difficult decisions a family faces. While every situation is unique, there are several common signs that suggest additional support might be necessary.



1. Difficulty with daily activities: Struggles with activities of daily living (ADLs) — like bathing, dressing or preparing meals — can signal the need for help. Look for signs such as unwashed clothing, body odor or missed meals.

2. Social isolation: Older adults often face loneliness due to limited mobility, chronic illness or an inability to drive. Isolation is linked to increased risks of depression and health issues. Noticing a lack of social engagement may indicate it is time to consider a more supportive environment.

3. Trouble maintaining the home: If a once-tidy home becomes cluttered or neglected, it may be due to physical limitations or memory

issues. Difficulty keeping up with chores, grocery shopping or home maintenance may signal the need for outside assistance.

4. Chronic health conditions: Managing multiple medications and appointments can be difficult, especially for those with conditions like diabetes or high blood pressure. Missed doctor visits or medication errors may suggest a need for structured medical support.

5. Recent injuries or health changes: Falls, surgeries or new diagnoses can make it hard for seniors to live independently. Increased supervision or rehabilitation may be necessary during recovery or as conditions progress.

6. Cognitive changes: Memory lapses, confusion or getting lost in familiar places can be early signs of cognitive decline. These changes may require specialized care to ensure safety and quality of life.

7. Caregiver stress: Family caregivers often juggle multiple responsibilities. Burnout can appear as anxiety, exhaustion or resentment. Recognizing the toll caregiving takes is important — for both the caregiver's and the senior's well-being.

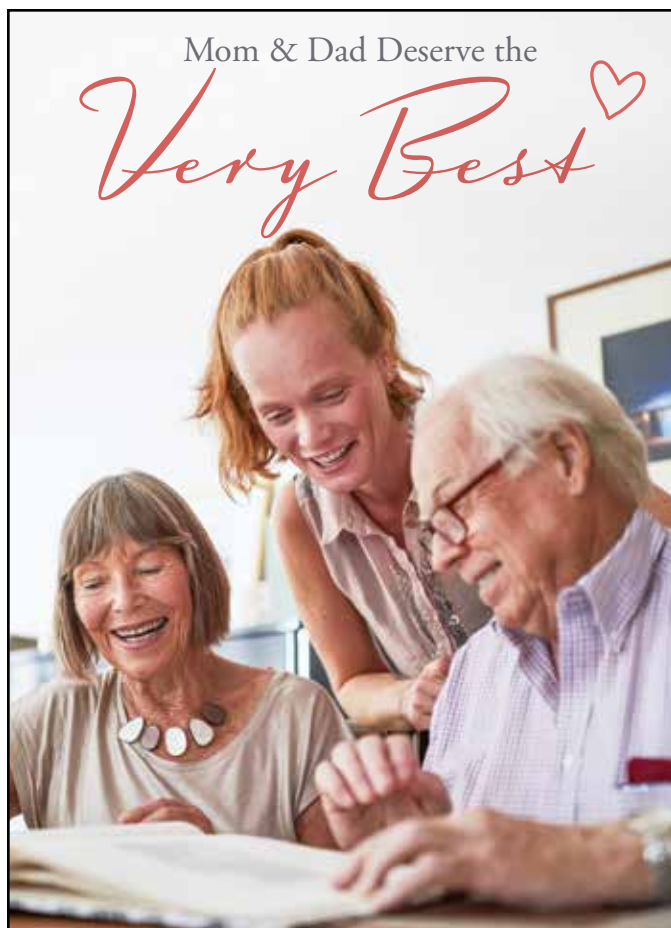
8. Safety concerns: Frequent falls, forgotten appliances or break-ins raise serious safety issues. Aging adults may require an environment designed to reduce risks and respond quickly in emergencies.

9. Poor nutrition and physical inactivity: Older adults may struggle with planning or preparing nutritious meals. Lack of exercise can also contribute to declining health. Monitoring weight loss or lack of mobility can be telling.

10. Financial mismanagement: Missed bills or susceptibility to scams may point to trouble managing finances. This can lead to serious consequences if not addressed.

Recognizing these signs doesn't mean failure — it means ensuring a loved one receives the care, safety and support they need. Taking action early can ease transitions and support long-term well-being. ■

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



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ARE YOU in the market for a miracle?

Dr. Helen Roseveare was a missionary in the Congo in Central Africa in the late 1950s-60s. In her biography, she writes that one night a mother at their mission station died during childbirth. She left behind a 2-year-old daughter and her premature baby, who was struggling to survive. They didn't have an incubator to keep the baby in, or electricity, so they searched for a water bottle to help keep the child warm, but the only one they had broke when they put water in it, so they were desperate for solutions. Dr. Roseveare gathered the children in the mission station together to pray for the baby and her sister. One of the little girls in that circle of children prayed, "Dear God, please send a hot water bottle today. Tomorrow will be too late because by then the baby will be dead. And, dear Lord, send a doll for her sister so she won't feel so lonely."



Dr. Roseveare felt on edge realizing the audacity of the prayer that little girl had just prayed. Could she in all honestly say "Amen" to that prayer believing that God would answer her prayer in such a bold way? The only way she could see God answering this prayer was by sending a package from her home in England, and, after having lived there for four years by that time, she had never once received a package from home. Even if someone had sent a package, who would put a hot water bottle in a package and send it to people who lived on the equator?

To all their great surprise, that afternoon, a large package arrived from England. Dr. Roseveare gathered the children around to open it. Everyone was excited to see what was inside. She reached inside and pulled out some jerseys that the people from home had knit for the children. They were excited to receive them, but that wasn't what they were looking for. Then she pulled out some much-needed baking items. What a blessing those were, but it wasn't what they were looking for.

She reached her hand into the box again, and she pulled out a brand-new hot water bottle. The tears began to flow. Then she reached her arm down into the box once more and pulled up a small, beautifully dressed dolly. The little girl's eyes sparkled. She had never doubted. God the Father knew in advance what those people in the mission needed five months before they were aware of their need. He made sure that, when the people of the Sunday School class back in England packed that box, that someone had included a hot water bottle, even though it was being sent to the equator, and a little dolly for an African child who, five months later, would become an orphan — and all in response to a prayer prayed by a little girl five months into the future and on the very day they would need it.

Are you in the market for a miracle in your life? Why not follow Jesus' advice? Here's what he said: "Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it." (John 14:13-14). ■

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

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HEATING & COOLING

By Dale Adams

SO MANY power surges: Is your AC protected?

An air conditioning (HVAC) system is a significant investment and an essential part of ensuring year-round comfort. With proper maintenance, an AC unit can last a great deal of time, but in the case of an electrical storm, an unexpected power surge can take out your unit.

In this article, we will explain how power surges can affect your AC unit and how you can protect it from potential damage.



Can a power outage damage an AC unit?

Yes, a power outage from a storm can absolutely damage an AC unit. HVAC systems often have little room for sudden voltage fluctuations, and, so, when a power surge or outage occurs, it can damage compressors, motors, circuit boards and other components within the air conditioner. If your AC unit fails to turn on after a storm, it may require outright replacement if the electrical damage is bad enough.

What's causing all these surges?

One common cause of power surges for air conditioning systems is a lightning strike during a storm. When lightning strikes near a power line or transformer, it can send a surge of electricity through the electrical grid, potentially damaging the delicate circuitry within your HVAC system. Another cause of power surges are utility grid fluctuations, which occur when there are sudden changes in voltage levels supplied by the electric company. Some other causes are malfunctioning appliances, and animal or tree interference.

The solution: AC unit surge protectors

The most effective way to shield your AC unit from electrical damage is to install a dedicated HVAC surge protector. Like the surge protectors used for computers and TVs, these devices are wired into the electrical supply line and prevent power spikes from reaching your HVAC components. The surge protectors absorb excess voltage, shielding the air handler, condensing unit, and other parts from damage.

AC unit surge protectors can be hardwired to the outside unit, the inside unit, or even directly to the high-efficiency motors that operate using DC voltage.

Given the high costs associated with replacing or repairing AC unit components like high-efficiency motors, compressors and circuit boards, we recommend opting to install an HVAC surge protector.

For those looking to add an extra layer of protection, there are surge protectors that also come with a voltage monitor. This device not only safeguards your HVAC system from power surges but can also shut down the unit if the voltage goes beyond set parameters. This preemptive measure can prevent severe damage from voltage fluctuations and save you from costly repairs or replacements.

It might seem excessive, but consider this: the one-time cost of a surge protector pales in comparison to that of replacing an entire AC unit due to storm damage. ■

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

MEET Kelli Harris

Creating camaraderie in the classroom

After graduating college in 2012, Kelli Harris began her teaching career at the Norwalk School District. Harris comes from a family of educators. Her mother was a high school math teacher for 36 years and still substitute teaches multiple times a week.

"Growing up, it seemed like she was a local celebrity because current and former students would get so excited to see her and have conversations. I got to see the positive impact she made firsthand," Harris says.

In addition, Harris' grandfather was a superintendent, her aunt is an English teacher, and her uncle was a school board president. Harris also had teachers in the Boone school district that inspired her to pursue a teaching career as early as first grade. Now, Harris is wrapping up her 13th year as an educator. She currently teaches math at the Norwalk High School.

"I actually accepted my job at Norwalk on Pi Day, which, as a math teacher, I thought was pretty fun," Harris says. "I absolutely love trying new things to stay fresh, relevant and engaging. The district has always supported and trusted me to try new things. Having this support and the ability to grow has really kept me passionate in the profession."

Harris enjoys teaching high school students because each student is unique. She likes having conversations about their passions, hobbies and future plans. Harris starts every class with a question of the day about something fun and random. She says this has helped her get to know her students better and create class camaraderie.

"It is important to me that students feel good about themselves, feel like they belong and know what they are capable of. The teaching profession allows us that opportunity every single day," Harris says.

Harris read the book "Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics" two summers ago and uses some of the practices daily to help create more engagement with her students. For example, she uses an app to place her students in random groups of three, which projects on her whiteboard as they enter her classroom. After finding their name, the students join their group where they collaborate and learn the skill for the day. The task starts with a question everyone can answer and then progresses until the students have discovered and learned the skill.

"Feedback from students is that they love getting to collaborate with classmates they normally wouldn't collaborate with. They learn how to help one another, fill in gaps and push each other. It truly is amazing to see and hear the collaboration between students," Harris says.

This summer, Harris is looking forward to spending time with her children. Together, they enjoy going to the pool, parks, the zoo, and other fun activities in the metro. Harris also recently took up golf and will try to golf as much as she can with her husband.

"Over the years, I have gotten kind notes or thank yous from students. I don't think they realize how big of an impact that makes for teachers. Knowing that you were a kind, positive person in that student's day — and it made a difference — makes teaching so worthwhile," Harris says. ■



Kelli Harris, a math teacher, was inspired by family and former teachers to become an educator.



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Dr. Richard Worsham

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Originally from West Valley, Utah, he grew up with nine siblings and spent two years in Paraguay, where he became fluent in Spanish and developed a love for Hispanic culture. He played college basketball at Utah State Eastern before completing his degree at BYU, graduating in May 2024. Richard married his wife Erin in 2014 and have three children. In his free time, he enjoys pickleball, movies, and family time. Passionate about dentistry, he enjoys performing a wide range of procedures and continually learning new skills. He's excited to join the Jones Family Dental team.




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GIVING back in retirement

Durham finds joy in helping others.

In her retirement, Betsy Durham keeps busy volunteering.

Through Norwalk Christian Church, she helps serve one of its core ministries: the English Language Learners ministry. Started in 2017, the initiative teaches English to refugees and immigrants and raises funds for college scholarships for their children (one of the first scholarship recipients just graduated from the University of Iowa).

The ministry began after AMOS Iowa — a coalition of institutions throughout Central Iowa that organize for justice and the common good — had conversations with Norwalk schools and identified a need for English teaching. Many parents of students were having trouble communicating with the school due to language barriers.

Today, the ministry offers four classes a week at Norwalk Christian Church. Durham says she has a lot of fun working with Africans and Latinos living in the Norwalk area through this effort.

The church is also involved in the Norwalk Area Ministerial



Jason Siemens of Edward Jones presents the Good Neighbor certificate to Betsy Durham.

Association, and so is Durham. She helps with the organization's mobile food pantry, Shoe Love, and the Warrior Giving Project at Christmastime.

Part of why Durham is involved in so many areas is that she serves as chair of the outreach committee at Norwalk Christian Church. For the mobile food pantry, she's also the manager, helping oversee the truck the Iowa Food Bank brings in every other month. The church unloads the truck and sets up stations for Norwalk area residents to come and receive food.

Throughout her volunteer work, Durham says she is honored to work alongside people with whom she has developed deep friendships. As a retired nurse, she also enjoys continuing to find personal joy in helping others.

"Volunteering provides purpose for my life and mixes me in the community of great people, especially during this retirement time," she says. "It gives me happiness to be able to do something."

Durham appreciates sharing all the blessings she's received in her life and hopes others see the benefits of getting involved in the community, too. ■

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ENJOY the season while staying on track

This time of year brings me to the outside and spending more time in my garden. Summer brings longer days, warmer weather and opportunities to enjoy the freedom that retirement offers. Whether it is traveling, spending time with family, or simply relaxing at home, the season invites us to embrace a slower pace and savor the moment. But, just like any season, summer also has its own financial considerations. As a financial advisor working with retirees, I've seen how planning ahead can make this season both enjoyable and financially secure.



Here are a few key financial tips to help retirees make the most of summer — without putting long-term goals at risk.

1. Adjust your spending plan for the season. Summer often brings a shift in spending. You may travel more, host family gatherings, or take on home improvement projects. These extra costs can add up quickly. Review your monthly budget and ensure that any added expenses still align with your overall retirement income strategy — whether it's from Social Security, pensions or retirement account withdrawals. Planning ahead helps you enjoy summer guilt-free and reduces the chance of overspending.

2. Travel smart and save. One of the great perks of retirement is the flexibility to travel during off-peak times. You can take advantage of midweek or last-minute deals and avoid the crowds. Don't forget to use any rewards points or senior discounts and be sure to budget for expenses like travel insurance, medical care abroad or currency exchange fees. Planning your trip around your financial comfort zone keeps vacations more enjoyable and stress-free.

3. Stay on top of required minimum distributions (RMDs). If you're 73 or older, you're required to take annual distributions from traditional IRAs or 401(k)s. Summer is a good time to check how much you've taken out so far and whether taxes are being withheld properly. Waiting until year-end to take your full RMD can increase the risk of missing the deadline and facing a penalty. Spreading it out over the year may be easier to manage and better for your tax planning.

4. Prioritize health and wellness. Summer heat and increased activity can impact your health and your finances. Make sure your Medicare coverage is current and understand what your plan includes if you're traveling. Schedule those checkups now and consider setting aside funds for unexpected health needs. Staying proactive about health is not just good for your body — it's good for your budget, too.

5. Review your financial plan. With the year halfway over, take time to revisit your retirement strategy. Are you on track with your goals? Do you need to rebalance your investments, update your estate plan or reassess your income needs? Summer can be a quieter time to organize your finances and hold important family conversations about legacy planning or end-of-life wishes.

Retirement is about enjoying the life you've worked hard to build. A bit of planning ensures summer is filled with joy, not financial stress. This would be a good time to reach out to a financial advisor to talk about summer plans and yearly goals. ■

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

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Check for cancellations

Upcoming in Norwalk Living magazine:

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

Coffee and Camaraderie

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

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



Norwalk Farmers Market

Every Friday through Oct. 10, 4-6:30 p.m.
Norwalk Christian Church parking lot,
701 Main St., Norwalk

The market will offer locally grown fruit and vegetables, baked goods, meat, eggs, local honey, fresh flowers, crafts and much more.

Middlebrook Mercantile June Events

4125 Cumming Ave., Cumming

- **June 13:** Live Music: Ryne Doughty, 7-10 p.m. Cedar County Cobras perform from 4:30-7:30 p.m. at Fridays at the Farm, Middlebrook Farmhouse, 4300 Cumming Ave.
- **June 14:** Opening at 3 p.m. Live Music: The Get Down, 5-8 p.m.
- **June 15:** Live Music: Dogtown Rhythm Band, 2-5 p.m.
- **June 19:** Event: Trivia, 6 p.m.
- **June 20:** Live Music: Chuggaluggers, 7-10 p.m. Robert Deitch performs from 4:30-7:30 p.m. at Fridays at the Farm, Middlebrook Farmhouse, 4300 Cumming Ave.
- **June 21:** Opening at 3 p.m. Live Music: Hot Off the Grill, 5-8 p.m.
- **June 22:** Opening at 1 p.m. Live Music: Bonne Finken, 2-5 p.m.
- **June 27:** Live Music: Dan Trick, 7-10 p.m. The Blue 2 + 1 perform from 4:30-7:30 p.m. at Fridays at the Farm, Middlebrook Farmhouse, 4300 Cumming Ave.
- **June 28:** Live Music: Emma Butterworth, 5-8 p.m.
- **June 29:** Live Music: Sampan Doo, 2-5 p.m.

Happy Hour all day Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 2-6 p.m. Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. More details at middlebrookmercantile.com

Free Lunch in the Park

Every Friday until Aug. 1, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

City Park, 907 North Ave., Norwalk

Free lunch will be open to everyone on Fridays at the City Park. On rainy days, the event will be held inside the Norwalk library, 1051 North Ave.



Warren County Historical Society garage sale

Friday, June 20, 3-7 p.m. and Saturday, June 21, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Warren County Historical Society will be holding its annual garage sale. Put these dates on your calendar, start collecting items you want to donate and think about volunteering to help the week of June 16 to sort, price, fluff or staff the sale on Friday or Saturday.

Pink Tractor Foundation Country Carnival

Saturday, June 14, 3:30 p.m.
16315 20th Ave., St. Charles

Enjoy carnival games, food trucks, a silent auction and a live auction. Proceeds benefit local families dealing with a cancer diagnosis. To donate or volunteer, contact pinktractorfoundation@gmail.com.



Des Moines Community Band 2025 Summer Concert Series - The Music of John Williams

The Greater Des Moines Community Band announces the schedule for its 2025 summer concert series, "The Music of John Williams." Summer Concert selections run the gamut from movie themes to music for major athletic events. Local events are:

- **July 14, 7 p.m.** Holland Farms, 2800 Sunset Drive, Norwalk
- **Aug. 17, 5 p.m.** Trinity United Presbyterian Church, 200 S. Howard St., Indianola

Check for cancellations



Carlisle Garden Tour

Saturday, June 21, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

If you love beautiful gardens and are looking to be inspired, come experience the second annual Gardens Thrive in 2025 garden tour. This self-guided tour of five private and three public gardens in Carlisle and the surrounding area will showcase different styles from gardeners of all experience levels. Guests can join the tour anytime throughout the event. Warren County Master Gardeners volunteers will be present at each host site to assist guests and answer questions. Proceeds from ticket sales will benefit programs in Warren County including horticultural programming, scholarships and grants, and landscape enhancements.

Event tickets complete with a tour map, addresses and descriptions are \$10. Ticket sales will be online until June 21 at <https://form.jotform.com/250434949926165>.

Tickets may also be purchased the day of the event at the Historic Randleman House at 245 Pennsylvania St., Carlisle, via credit/debit card only. Vendors will be set up at the Randleman House as well.

Guests are encouraged to bring a hat, sunscreen, water, umbrella and comfortable walking shoes. The event will be held rain or shine.

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.

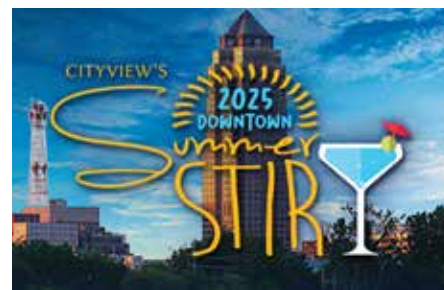
- **June 14-17:** Bindlestiff Family Circus, parks across the metro
- **June 21, July 12, Aug. 23:** Dancing on Cowles Commons
- **July 9, Aug. 13:** Storytime Under the Green Umbrella, Cowles Commons
- **July 21-22:** Dupont Brass, parks across the metro

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 drapos (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.



CITYVIEW'S SUMMER STIR

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Court Avenue District, Des Moines
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CITYVIEW's traveling cocktail party is back in downtown Des Moines. Sample many of summer's finest drinks at some of the area's best bars and restaurants. Try 10 different sample-size drinks for only \$25 with your online order (\$35 at the door).

Vendor Market

Saturday, June 21, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Outlets of Des Moines, 801 Bass
Pro Drive, Suite 315, Altoona

Each show has a variety of vendors from Avon, essential oils, Tupperware, Freeze Dried Candies, honey, 3D, Tastefully Simple, Gems & Crystals, Scentsy, plus others. Come check out the vendors and buy local. If interested in being a vendor, email k2marketplacemagic@gmail.com.

Wallace Centers of Iowa Summer Events

Wallace Farm, 2773 290th St., Orient

Wallace House, 756 16th St., Des Moines

- **Pizza on the Prairie: Every Friday until Sept. 26, 5-9 p.m., Wallace Farm.**

Come to the prairie at the Wallace Farm on Friday nights during the summer for brick oven pizza packed with farm-fresh veggies and local meats. This family-friendly evening is Wallace Centers' signature summer event packed with good food, live music, outdoor art and picturesque sunsets. Reservations for pizza ordering times are required. Book ordering time at <https://wallace.org/pizza-on-the-prairie/>

- **Tapas in the Garden: Tuesday, June 24, 6-8 p.m., Wallace Farm.** Enjoy a summer evening at the Wallace Farm strolling through the prairie walking path, exploring the gardens, and connecting over delicious food and drink. \$35/ticket. <https://wallace.org/event/tapas-in-the-garden-new/>

- **Historic Corn Plot Dinner: Tuesday, July 1, 6-8:30 p.m., Wallace Farm.** Each course of this special meal at the Wallace Farm includes corn previously harvested from the on-site Henry A. Wallace Historic Corn Plot as a featured ingredient. \$75/ticket. <https://wallace.org/event/historic-corn-plot-dinner/>

- **Farm to Table Vegan Dinner: Tuesday, July 22, 6-8:30 p.m., Wallace House.** Enjoy a vibrant three-course vegan dinner featuring produce from Wallace Centers gardens and locally sourced seasonal ingredients. \$75/ticket. <https://wallace.org/event/farm-to-table-vegan-dinner/> ■

ROOTED in community

Rieper finds home and opportunity in Norwalk



Jason and Jennifer Rieper moved from West Des Moines to Norwalk in search of a smaller community. They found a neighborhood that fits their lifestyle.

Jason Rieper and his wife, Jennifer, have had a Norwalk address since spring 2017. They originally purchased a small acreage southeast of town, just a couple of miles away, where they lived until early 2021, when they bought a home in the Ridge development at Echo Valley. For the past four years, the Riepers have enjoyed all the comfort and accessibility that come with living in a close-knit community.

Before settling in Norwalk, the couple lived in West Des Moines. But, as the city grew, they felt it had become too big for their lifestyle. They began looking for something quieter and more relaxed.

In 2021, while searching for their new home, they found a 5-year-old house that suited their needs perfectly. It was slightly smaller than their previous home, which they

saw as a benefit.

"Most of the homes in [the Ridge] area are ranch-style homes with walkout basements, and that was appealing to us," Rieper says.

The neighborhood itself was another selling point.

"Even though it's in town, it's a pretty slow type feeling to the neighborhood," Rieper says. "There's not a lot of traffic or people screaming by on the road. But with where it is, it's still easy to get to Des Moines."

Rieper's office is near the airport, just six minutes away, making for an easy commute.

The couple is active in the community as members of New Life Lutheran Church, which they have attended since moving to the area. Rieper also served on the church council for about three years.

In February, Rieper became even more

deeply rooted in Norwalk when he became part-owner of Cooper's Central Table and Cocktail, alongside business partner Ryan Cooper — the person behind Cooper's on 5th in Valley Junction.

"We had been living in Norwalk and knew how it was growing," Rieper says.

Together, they decided to bring a high-quality sit-down restaurant to the community. Rieper notes that they make a point to hire as many local staff members from Norwalk as possible.

Perhaps what Rieper enjoys most about Norwalk is how it reminds him of his childhood, growing up in a small town.

"I loved the feel of community," he says. "Norwalk is growing exponentially, we know that, but it still has that small-town feel, that sense of community, that support." ■

THE SCOTCHEROOS that became a family tradition

“My mom’s Scotcheroos are the best!”

The first time I heard one of my daughters say that, I was deeply honored — and I still feel that way every time I hear it. They often tell me about other versions they have tried and always end with, “They were good, but yours are the best!”

In our family, Scotcheroos are a must-have at gatherings, reunions, road trips and just about any occasion. These sweet treats deliver a perfect combo: smooth peanut butter flavor, a satisfying crunch, and a thick, rich layer of butterscotch-chocolate topping that keeps everyone coming back for seconds. I am happy to share the secrets behind their success, but I first must give credit where credit is due. My friend Tammy Even gifted me this recipe more than 30 years ago at my bridal shower. I still have the recipe book my friends gave me that day, and I use it often.

Now, the secrets:

1. Use Special K cereal — it gives the perfect texture and structure. I know many recipes use crispy rice cereal, but trust me on this one. It is truly the ingredient that makes the difference.

2. Don’t skip on the topping — use one full bag each of semi-sweet chocolate chips and butterscotch chips.

3. Watch the syrup closely — this step can make or break the batch. Don’t overcook or undercook it. Bring it just to a boil (for maybe a minute). The sugar crystals need to melt completely, or the syrup will turn gritty. But overcook it, and your Scotcheroos will be too chewy.

Here’s a tip: Dip a spoon in the hot syrup, tap a little onto the counter, and taste it. If you can still feel sugar crystals, keep it on the stove a bit longer. The moment they are gone, pull it off the heat.

Give these a try and let me know what you think. Do you have recipe traditions you would like to share? Send them my way at jolene@iowalivingmagazines.com. Happy snacking! ■

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



Scotcheroos

Ingredients

- 6 cups Special K cereal
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 cup corn syrup
- 1.5 cups peanut butter
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 1 12-ounce package of semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 12-ounce package of butterscotch chips

Directions

- Let sugar and corn syrup come to a boil in saucepan on the stove. Do not let boil long, just until sugar is not crystalized. Remove from stove. Add peanut butter and vanilla. Stir. Add cereal. Press into a 9-inch by 13-inch pan. Let cool. Melt all chips in a microwave-safe bowl in the microwave. Spread over bars. Allow topping to set before cutting and serving. Enjoy!



Start your morning off right with an update from the**daily**umbrella

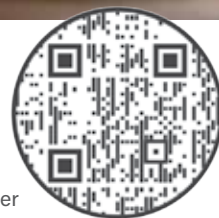
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MAYOR'S MOMENT

Front Porch Norwalk

The Front Porch Norwalk events kick off this month and are scheduled for June 11, July 9 and August 13. These events are a fantastic opportunity to meet and get to know your neighbors. The concept is really simple. Someone in your neighborhood — maybe you — volunteers to be the host. The host invites their neighbors to come over and visit. The neighbors bring their own chairs, set up on your front porch, in your driveway or in your front yard. It's that easy. Norwalk Hometown Pride would like to know about your event, and ask that you register on their website. Registering means you may also get a friendly visit from the Police Department and from the Fire Department, which is usually a lot of fun for the kids.

Fireworks Update

The State Legislature passed a change to the Iowa Code this last session that indicates the city can no longer regulate fireworks on July 3, July 4 and December 31. Here are the dates and times you can legally use fireworks in the City of Norwalk:

- July 2 - Fireworks are allowed from 4–10 p.m.
- July 3 - Fireworks are allowed from 9 a.m.–10 p.m., unless it falls on a Saturday or Sunday, then 9 a.m. – 11 p.m.
- July 4 - Fireworks are allowed from 9 a.m.–11 p.m. - December 31 - Fireworks are allowed from 9 a.m. – 12:30 a.m. on January 1

Due to the State Legislature passing changes to Iowa's Code, should you have any complaints regarding your neighbors setting off fireworks illegally, you will need to contact our State Representative Samantha Fett (samantha.fett@legis.iowa.gov) or Senator Julian Garrett (julian.garrett@legis.iowa.gov) to express your concerns.

Independence Day

With our summer in full swing, I, like many of you, am looking forward to our Independence Day celebration on July 4. I may be a little biased, but I think we have a fantastic parade in Norwalk and I'm always amazed at the number of people lining our streets. In addition to the parade, the Norwalk Lion's Club will again be putting on one of the best fireworks displays in Central Iowa. The show at McAninch Sports Complex on the south end of town is remarkable. If you haven't seen it, you are definitely missing out.

My next article won't be out before our Independence day festivities, so I hope you all enjoy yourselves and the long holiday weekend. Please be safe and make good choices.



Tom Phillips, Mayor

Purchase Norwalk Fieldhouse Passes Online

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



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT!

Julia Carmichael, Library Circ.Assistant



Julia Carmichael has been a friendly face at the Norwalk Easter Public Library for the past nine years, serving as a Library Circulation Assistant. She loves her job—especially because of her fun and supportive coworkers and the amazing community of patrons. One of her favorite parts of the job is seeing kids light up when they find a book they're excited to read. She also gets a kick out of watching new residents walk through the doors for the first time, totally surprised by the wide variety of free items and services the library offers.

Outside of work, Julia and her husband Tom live on an acreage with her mom, where they stay busy tending to a big garden, fruit trees, and a yard that keeps the mower running! Julia is all about family—she and Tom have two married children and six grandkids, and spending time with them is truly her favorite thing in the world.

A fun fact about Julia? For the past 15 years, she's taken a four-generation Mother's Day photo featuring the girls in her family. It started with her mom, daughter, and granddaughter, and has since grown to include her daughter-in-law and three more granddaughters—what a beautiful tradition!

Next time you're at the library, be sure to say "hi" to Julia—she's always happy to help and share a smile!

New Battery Drop-Off Now Available in Norwalk

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

What's Accepted?

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

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

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



city of norwalk newsletter JUNE 2025

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Adventure Pass Re-Launched at Library

Adventure Awaits You! After a brief pause, the Iowa Adventure Pass is relaunching thanks to the collaboration of libraries across the state and some of Iowa's fascinating destinations. This program allows library cardholders to check out free passes to family-friendly destinations. Whether you're planning a day at the Blank Park Zoo, touring the Science Center of Iowa, browsing the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, or visiting the Des Moines Children's Museum, the Iowa Adventure Pass makes it easy and affordable to try out a new destination.

How It Works:

- If your home library offers the Iowa Adventure Pass, Reserve a pass online using your library card.
- Print or download your confirmation.
- Show it at the destination, along with your matching photo ID, for free admission!

Each pass offers free entry for two adults and two children (unless otherwise specified), and it's just one more way your library connects you to new experiences.

For Norwalk Easter Public Library: Adults, 18 years of age and older, with a valid library card that is non-expired and in good standing may reserve passes by visiting the library's website, scanning the qr code below or contacting the library.

Please note: Access to this service from Norwalk Easter Public Library is available to Norwalk and rural Warren County residents only. Residents of Carlisle, Indianola, Lacona, Milo, and New Virginia should visit their home public library to obtain a library card to borrow Adventure Passes through funding from Warren County (thank you to the Warren County Board of Supervisors!). Residents of Cumming must work with West Des Moines Public Library per their City contract for library services to obtain Adventure Passes. Several metro area libraries are also part of the Iowa Adventure Pass, so please check with your local library to see if this service is available in your community.



IMPORTANT NOTICES

City State Bank Norwalk Fieldhouse will be closed July 4. Thank you for understanding!

Norwalk Aquatic Center 4th of July Hours:
Lap Swim: 12:00pm - 1:00pm
Open Swim: 1:00pm - 5:00pm

SAVE THE DATES JULY IS NATIONAL PARKS & REC MONTH!

Join us to explore Norwalk's parks and take part of numerous activities! Scan the QR code for the activity calendar & more info.



IMPORTANT LINKS FOR NORWALK!

Aquatic Center Playbook



2025 Summer Playbook



{YEL!} Bricktopia Master Builders Summer Camp

July 21-24 | 9am-12pm



Youth & Adult Tennis Summer Lessons



Summer Adult Fitness Programs



City State Bank Norwalk Fieldhouse

View amenities, hours, rates and more.



Giant Candy Land

Saturday, June 28 from 10am-noon

Play in the gumdrop mountains (ball pit)! Scoop the ice cream peaks (insta-snow)! Play in the chocolate swamp (pretend chocolate play dough)! Join us for fun Candy Land-themed sensory play. Dress for a bit of mess. Recommended for ages 3-6

Ladies' Night Out with Author Angela Youngers*

Thursday, June 26 from 6:30-8 pm

Join author Angela Youngers for a fun ladies' night with party games, book talk, & lively discussion on "Another Dance." Enjoy excerpts, behind-the-scenes stories, & chats about marriage, motherhood, & romance. Books available for purchase. *Register online to reserve your space.

Family Craft Night: Tie Dye*

Monday, June 30 with sessions at 4:30, 5:30, & 6:30 pm

Tie & dye your own colorful creation at this free, all ages/family craft night! We'll provide one bandana; you may bring one other item (details provided upon registration). Recommended for ages 5 & up; all ages including teens & adults are welcome to participate!

*Register online to reserve your time & space.



HOW-TO GUIDE

HOW TO CHOOSE A FINANCIAL ADVISOR

Working with a professional financial advisor could be the best investment you'll ever make. The best planners can help you meet your financial goals now and in the future. An advisor can bring their experiences and objective perspective to advise you on how best to save, invest and spend your money. They can also suggest avenues of money management. Some investments help lower your tax liability. Also, they can help guide you through uncertain financial times.

To find a reliable financial advisor, start by asking your friends and family for suggestions. Research online for advisors in your area. Searching a potential advisor using brokercheck.finra.org will list any disclosures and the advisor's work history. Remember to research each advisor with

an eye toward your own situation and goals. Once you have a list of possible advisors, set a time to meet, and see if the fit is right for you.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Financial products can contribute to your wellbeing and peace of mind. Some common investments are CDs, bonds, mutual funds, stocks and commodities. Weighing risk is essential.

Some products will be better for your portfolio than others. An experienced financial advisor can customize a portfolio especially for you. The financial advisor should also understand how much risk you want to take.

FEES OR COMMISSIONS

Inquire about how your advisor is paid for

their services. Make sure you understand the fees you are paying and that you are only paying for services you're actually using. Typically accounts are either fee-based or commission-based. A fee-based account charges a monthly fee based upon the value of your account. In a fee-based account, you are able to make changes in the account without additional expenses. A commission-based account only charges a fee if, and when, a trade is placed. The commission may be at the front end or back end for both the buy and sell depending upon the product.

Once everything has been completed to your satisfaction, you can choose a financial advisor. They will partner with you to reach your goals, whether it's retirement, emergency savings, a vacation home, or another goal that you have. ■

Edward Jones

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HOW TO CHOOSE A DANCE STUDIO FOR YOUR CHILDREN

Choosing the right dance studio for your child is not just about technique and talent — it's about finding a place where they can shine, grow and fall in love with movement. The right studio can help build confidence, discipline, friendships and a lasting appreciation for the arts. Whether your child dreams of the stage or simply wants to dance for fun, here are some guiding stars to help you make the best choice:

1. DETERMINE YOUR CHILD'S GOALS

Start by talking with your child about what they hope to gain from dance. Are they looking for a fun, active outlet or aiming for serious training and performance opportunities? Studios often have different focuses—some offer a more recreational approach, while others cater to competitive dancers or those pursuing a professional path. Aligning your child's goals with the studio's mission helps ensure a positive experience.

2. RESEARCH THE STUDIO'S REPUTATION

A studio's reputation can speak volumes. Check online reviews, ask for testimonials and connect with other dance families in your community. A well-regarded studio is more likely to offer qualified instructors, strong communication and a positive, uplifting environment.

3. CHECK INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS

The instructors are the guiding lights of any dance program. Look for experienced professionals who are not only skilled dancers but also passionate and patient educators. Certifications, performance backgrounds and ongoing training are great signs of a strong and dedicated staff.

4. OBSERVE A CLASS

Before enrolling, ask if you can observe a class or attend a trial session. This gives you a chance to see the class dynamic, teaching style, student engagement and overall vibe.

5. CONSIDER CLASS OFFERINGS AND SCHEDULE

A diverse selection of dance styles — like ballet, jazz, tap, hip-hop and contemporary — gives your child room to explore and discover their unique style. Also, make sure the class schedule fits with your family's routine and allows room for growth.

6. REVIEW COST AND COMMITMENT

Understand all costs up front — tuition, recital fees, costumes, competition expenses and any registration or seasonal commitments. Every studio has a different pricing structure, so make sure it is a good fit for your budget and expectations.

In the end, the best dance studio is one where your child feels like a star — encouraged, supported and inspired. When you find a place that values both personal growth and artistic development, you're setting the stage for something truly magical. ■



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HOW TO CHOOSE A NEW CAR DEALER

Choosing a new car dealer is almost as important as choosing the car itself. You've probably invested some time into the make and model of car you want, but maybe not so much time, if any, thinking about the dealer. There is usually no shortage of dealers who carry many of the popular models, so one may seem just as good as the other. Not true.

Pick the wrong dealer and you could get stuck with a lemon or unfair financing terms. A good dealer, however, will make the car buying process a transparent breeze and offer excellent after-purchase support. Here are some things to think about if you are in the market for a new car.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT CAR

The first thing you need to figure out is what type of automobile you are looking to buy. This will help you narrow down brands and pick your best option. Large families may need an SUV or van to fit

everyone into the vehicle. But college students buying their first car would probably be happy with a compact car. The savings on gas will help ease your finances while you are in school.

Along with the car model, there are numerous options to consider. You might get a car with a navigation system, moon roof, GPS and satellite radio, just to name a few. Many of these amenities are now standard, but some involve extra costs.

If you have to commute long distances, think about purchasing a smaller car with a good MPG (miles per gallon) rating. Hybrid cars can help you save money on gas. Anyone in a cold climate might look at various vehicles with either all-wheel or front-wheel drive.

CHOOSE THE DEALER

Once you have settled on a car model, check into area car dealers. Finding several dealers who sell the brand of car you

want is usually best. The competition for your business will help you negotiate the total cost of your car. Make sure to look for current discounts on the car you want. During specific times of the year, you might be able to get a great deal on a new car. It is particularly true during year-end sales.

Of course, you should test drive a car before purchasing it. When you begin your negotiations, remember that price isn't everything. Service should play a role as well. You are building a long-term relationship with this dealer and manufacturer. It is not worth getting a less-than-satisfactory experience just to save a few dollars.

Make sure you feel comfortable with the dealership. Buying a car is an expensive, long-term commitment. It is always better to find a car salesperson who is informative and friendly. It will make your transaction as simple and comfortable as possible. ■



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HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT BAR SERVICE

When planning an event — whether it is a wedding, corporate gathering, birthday party or fundraiser — offering the right bar service can elevate the entire experience. From signature cocktails to professional bartenders, the right bar service contributes to the atmosphere, guest satisfaction and smooth operation of the event. Here's how to choose the best one for your needs.

1. UNDERSTAND YOUR EVENT NEEDS

Before reaching out to bar service providers, define the type of event you're hosting. Is it formal or casual? Will it have 50 guests or 500? Will alcohol be a central part of the celebration or just a nice touch? Understanding these elements helps determine the type of bar service needed — full bar, beer and wine only, or perhaps a dry bar with mocktails.

2. CHECK LICENSING AND INSURANCE

Always choose a bar service that is fully licensed and insured. A legitimate service

will have liability insurance and certified bartenders trained in responsible alcohol service. This protects you as the host and ensures your guests are in safe, capable hands.

3. REVIEW PACKAGES AND PRICING

Bar services typically offer various packages — open bar, cash bar, consumption-based or a mix. Review what each includes: types of alcohol, mixers, garnishes, glassware and staffing. Make sure there are no hidden fees for travel, setup or cleanup. A transparent quote should outline all costs.

4. CUSTOMIZATION AND SIGNATURE OPTIONS

Top-tier bar services will offer customization to fit your theme or preferences. Ask if they can create signature cocktails, source specific brands, or incorporate seasonal ingredients. Personalized drink menus can add a memorable and cohesive touch to your event.

5. ASK FOR REFERENCES AND REVIEWS

Reputation matters. Ask for testimonials or check online reviews to get a sense of past client experiences. A reliable provider will have a track record of punctuality, professionalism and quality service.

6. SCHEDULE A TASTING (IF POSSIBLE)

Some bar services offer tastings — especially if you're ordering a custom cocktail list. This not only ensures the drinks are up to par but also gives you a feel for the staff's presentation and personality.

7. CONSIDER SETUP AND SERVICE STYLE

Logistics are key. Will the bar be stationary or mobile? Indoors or outdoors? Do they provide their own bar setup or use your venue's facilities? Make sure their style matches the flow and layout of your event. By following these tips, you'll find a bar service that enhances your event with great drinks, smooth service and a professional touch your guests will appreciate. ■

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HOW TO CHOOSE GARAGE DOORS

Garage doors are often an afterthought to homeowners — but they shouldn't be. Garage doors are the first thing most notice about a home, so when it comes to choosing them for a new home or replacing them, significant thought and research should take place. If your garage faces the front of the house, a new door could dramatically improve your curb appeal and change the overall look of your home. If you're selling, worn, dated doors tend to say a lot about the condition of the rest of the home. A garage door is also an excellent security asset for your home, allowing you to secure your vehicle inside. If you're thinking about installing a new garage door, you may be surprised at just how many options are on the market — and how affordably they can be installed.

THE LOOK

Garage doors have seen an explosion in styles, materials and colors that are designed to match the architecture of any home, from rural barns to craftsman bungalows

or sleek urban getaways. So if you thought your choices were limited to simple sheet metal styles, think again. You should also pay close attention to the materials. Today's garage doors can be made from expensive hardwoods, textured vinyl, fiberglass or basic aluminum, all of which will have a big impact on the look and longevity of your doors. Pay close attention to the maintenance needs of whatever material you choose. Some will hold their color longer than others, and real wood doors can require regular staining and sealing every few years to keep them looking spectacular.

INSULATION

Depending on climate, the insulation of your garage door can be an important factor to help reduce your energy bills. This is especially important in heated garages. But even an insulated door on unheated garages can make a positive impact on your energy usage if it can keep the hot and cold weather away from the interior of your house. ■

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HOW TO USE PLAY AND SOCIAL INTERACTION TO SUPPORT CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Play and social interaction are more than just fun for kids — they are essential for healthy development, especially in the early years. From infancy through adolescence, children learn best through hands-on experiences and meaningful relationships.

In early childhood, play lays the foundation for brain development. Simple activities like peek-a-boo, stacking blocks or pretend cooking help build attention, coordination, language and social-emotional skills. During these years, play isn't just valuable — it is how young children make sense of the world.

As kids grow, social play deepens emotional intelligence. Playing with peers teaches cooperation, problem-solving and empathy. Whether it's taking turns on the swings or working out a disagreement in a group game, kids are practicing essential life skills.

Play is also a powerful buffer against stress. Laughter, movement and connection

help regulate emotions and promote mental well-being. It is no wonder that play is often called “the work of childhood.”

Today, many families are concerned about the impact of screen time. While technology has its place, too much of it can crowd out the hands-on, face-to-face experiences that children need most. To encourage more meaningful play, families can set aside tech-free times each day and offer simple materials like blocks, books or art supplies. Make space for creativity with outdoor play, building forts or make-believe adventures. Plan playdates, visit local parks or try family game nights to build connection and fun. Unstructured, kid-led play — without constant adult direction — is also crucial to build resiliency.

And don't forget the power of joining in. You don't need fancy toys or elaborate plans — what matters most is your presence, curiosity and willingness to connect through simple, shared

experiences that spark joy and imagination. When adults engage playfully — getting down on the floor, asking silly questions, or following a child's lead — it not only strengthens the parent-child bond, it shows kids that play matters. It also boosts language, confidence and emotional connection in everyday moments.

Play can also be built into everyday routines. Turn clean-up time into a race, invent songs while brushing teeth, or create a morning “high-five” ritual before school. These small, playful moments can spark joy and connection throughout the day.

In short, play is not a luxury or a break from learning — it is learning. Especially in the early years, play paired with social interaction nurtures confident, curious and emotionally strong kids. Less screen time, more playtime — it is one of the best investments we can make in a child's future. ■

Empowering Children, Teens, & Families to Connect, Grow and Thrive

WePlay

Program for Caregivers & Children (6 Months to 4 Years)

WePlay! is a 6-week program that helps families connect through play and learning. Each session includes fun, skill-building games, caregiving tips, snacks, and take-home activities to support your child's social, emotional, and cognitive growth in a warm, welcoming environment.

Social Skills

Program for Children & Teens (6 Years to 18 Years)

Our 10-week Social Skills Groups help participants build confidence, improve communication, and strengthen friendships. Participants, grouped by age and developmental level, engage in games, role-play, and real-life practice to develop emotional regulation and social skills in a fun, supportive environment.

Body Positivity

Program for Middle & High School Students

This 6-week group helps students build a healthy relationship with food and their bodies. In a safe, supportive space, participants explore the links between nutrition, brain health, and body image, while gaining tools to navigate societal pressures. Groups are organized by identified gender.



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FROM START to finish

Norwalk class wraps year up with annual fashion show.

If you love fashion shows but aren't into the hustle and bustle of the industry meccas of Los Angeles or New York City, there's another option right here at home: The Norwalk High School annual fashion show.

The event — the eighth of its kind — was held on April 30 in the Norwalk Performing Arts Center this year and was the brainchild of Norwalk High School Family and Consumer Sciences instructor Bailey Ashbacher. Ten years ago, she noticed that students were becoming increasingly interested in taking additional fashion classes. So, she acted, and an Advanced Fashion course was born.

The fashion show is the big night of the year for the class, Ashbacher says.

"It's completely student-led, from designing and sewing the garments to planning the event," she says. "Each student creates their own mini collection, and then we bring it all to life on the stage with music, lights and a full runway show."

The show features students from the Advanced Fashion class, who have built up their skills by previously taking Fashion 1 and 2 courses. Each student designs and creates a clothing line — usually five to 10 looks — and then often recruits friends or classmates to serve as models. The theme each year is "find your muse," which allows students to pick their own inspiration and theme for their own line. Preparation begins in the fall, and students spend the semester creating mood boards to plan their line and constructing garments. The second semester is spent wrapping up the sewing portion and prepping for the show.

"It's months in the making," Ashbacher says. "Students start sketching ideas and choosing fabrics early in the semester, and from there it's a lot of sewing, adjusting and perfecting. On top of that, we have students helping with planning the show itself, everything from lighting and music to stage setup. It takes a ton of behind-the-scenes work, but it's so worth it when everything comes together on show day."



Members of the Norwalk High School Advanced Fashion Class held their annual fashion show April 30 at Norwalk Performing Arts Center, the culmination of a year's worth of work and preparation.

This year's show was great, she says.

"The students really outdid themselves," Ashbacher says. "The creativity, the confidence, the energy — it was all there. You could feel how proud they were, and I love seeing their faces light up when their work is modeled on the stage in front of an audience. It was a fabulous show."

Equally important are the lessons learned in the process and the confidence gained in completing a months-long project.

"They start with just an idea in their head and to see it go from a sketch to a finished garment, and then watch it walk down the runway, is such a powerful moment," Ashbacher says. "It proves to them that they can take on a big project and pull it off. For some of them, they literally start fashion learning how to turn on a machine and end up creating an entire line of garments." ■

NEWS BRIEF

HOLLAND FARMS named to both the Best Memory Care and Best Assisted Living lists

Holland Farms Senior Living in Norwalk has been recognized by U.S. News & World Report as a Best Assisted Living and Best Memory Care community for 2025, marking the third year in a row the community has been recognized. Holland Farms is managed by Agemark Senior Living, a family-owned senior living company established in the 1980s. In addition to being named to both lists, the community received notable accolades in the categories of Food and Dining, Activities and Enrichment and Feels Like Home.

Now in its fourth year, the 2025 Best

Senior Living ratings from U.S. News evaluated more than 3,800 communities in the United States. Communities are assessed based on residents' and family members' satisfaction with safety, care, community management, staff, value and services and amenities.

"The Agemark team is very proud of Holland Farms," Marty Hug, CEO of Agemark Senior Living says. "This U.S. News and World Report honor is special because it's based on feedback provided directly from community residents and their families. We know that our team in Norwalk is dedicated

to helping residents and families by providing exceptional assisted living and memory care services in an outstanding community that residents can call home."

Blake Dodd, executive director of Holland Farms, says, "It's an incredible honor to be recognized by U.S. News and World Report. This recognition is a testament to our team's compassion, consistency and dedication. Every day, they bring heart and purpose to their roles, and it shows in the lives they touch. We're deeply appreciative that our residents and their families continue to place their trust in Holland Farms." ■

HELP ensure continued independence as you age

Sandra, 68, is committed to aging in place. She's active, eats a balanced diet, and enjoys good health. But her son and daughter, both living out of state, can't help but worry.

What if something

changes — and she suddenly needs care?

Their concern is valid. Staying at home as we grow older can be a fulfilling choice, but it isn't always the most practical. Health conditions can develop, and the cost of in-home assistance can become overwhelming.

So, what are the options if moving into a community isn't the right fit — but planning for potential health needs is still top of mind?

One increasingly popular solution is



a Continuing Care at Home (CC@H) membership. Typically offered by organizations that specialize in aging services, CC@H programs are designed to help older adults remain in their homes longer, with a strong focus on proactive health and financial planning for future care.

If you're considering a CC@H membership — for yourself or a loved one — be sure to ask the right questions:

Does the program offer personalized well-being support? A good program should provide guidance such as wellness coaching to help you stay independent and thrive. Research shows people achieve better outcomes with the support of a dedicated advocate.

Are future care costs covered? Quality programs help pay for services you may

need later, whether it's home health care or a transition to a senior living community.

Who's behind the program? Look into the organization offering it. Do they have a strong track record in the aging services space? Longevity and a solid reputation matter — they're signs the program will be there when you need it.

The bottom line: Not all CC@H programs are alike. Choose one that fits your current lifestyle and supports your future — while offering peace of mind for you and your family. ■

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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New! New! And more news!



The Village is growing in beautiful and exciting ways! We're making room for more, offering:

- 28 new independent living apartments — and reservations are currently being accepted with the remaining inventory limited!
- A community room addition to our main building
- Enhanced dining venues
- Plans for other amenities — including outdoor dining, raised garden beds, and a dog park — are in the works!
- Revamped wellness area with weight gym and yoga room
- More "pampering" services with an improved hair salon that can also offer manicures, pedicures and massage
- Renovation to our long-term care households that includes all private suites and private half baths
- A refresh to our current Aspen independent living building common areas

We've broken ground! See for yourself at an upcoming event.

Bloom Bar: Thursday, June 26 at 4 p.m.

Join us for an afternoon of floral artistry! We will highlight all The Village has to offer while you enjoy a glass of wine and arrange a beautiful bouquet to take home.

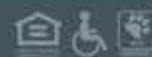
To RSVP, contact Amber at (515) 961-0878 or amcdonald@wesleylife.org.



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WELLNESS

By Chelsea Taggart, L.E.

GLOW all summer long

We believe summer is the perfect time to refresh your glow and simplify your beauty routine. Check for a spa that offers curated summer services that are designed to keep you looking effortlessly radiant and protected all season long.

Start with a rejuvenating HydraFacial, perfect for deep cleansing, exfoliation and hydration. It's ideal for reviving sun-exposed skin and achieving that coveted summer glow with no downtime. For even smoother, more radiant skin, add dermaplaning to gently remove dead skin cells and peach fuzz, leaving your face silky and makeup ready.

Looking for a more tailored experience? Custom spa facials are designed around your unique skin needs, whether it's hydration, calming sensitivity, brightening or treating breakouts. Each facial is formulated with hand-selected ingredients to ensure your skin stays balanced and healthy all summer long.

Want to wake up ready with minimal effort? Look into a lash lift and tint. This will enhance your natural lashes with a long-lasting curl and rich color, no mascara needed. Pair it with brow lamination for full, fluffy brows that stay perfectly in place despite heat and humidity.

To keep your skin protected, use a personalized SPF and skincare consultations that will help you build a summer-friendly routine that defends against UV damage and supports your skin goals.

Whether you're prepping for a vacation or simply treating yourself, a spa will have everything you need to look and feel your best this summer. ■



Information provided by Chelsea Taggart, L.E., Vivid Life Spa, 1016 Main St., Norwalk, 515-850-7848, www.vividlifespa.com.

JUNE IS NATIONAL ORAL HEALTH MONTH

Tips for practicing good oral hygiene:

- ✓ Brush your teeth at least twice a day
- ✓ Floss daily
- ✓ Use fluoride toothpaste
- ✓ Limit sugary drinks and snacks
- ✓ Schedule regular dental check-ups

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HEALTH

By Dr. Elizabeth Fleck

THE TRUTH about sugar and cavities

Many people believe that avoiding candy and brushing regularly is enough to prevent cavities. While brushing and flossing are essential, they cannot fully undo the damage caused by a high-sugar diet.

The common misconception is that only obvious sweets like candy or soda cause tooth decay. In truth, all carbohydrates — including bread, crackers and fruit — can fuel cavity-causing bacteria. These bacteria feed on sugars and starches, producing acids that wear away enamel.

What matters most is not just what you eat, but how often you eat it. Frequent snacking or sipping sugary drinks throughout the day means your teeth are constantly under acid attack. Even the best brushing routine cannot neutralize this constant exposure.

Your toothbrush is powerful — but it is not a magic eraser. You cannot out-brush a bad diet. If you are eating sugar throughout the day, brushing twice daily won't fully protect your teeth. Good oral hygiene is critical, but it is only part of the picture.

Limit sugary foods and drinks, avoid frequent snacking, and rinse with water after meals. Combined with proper brushing and flossing, these habits give your teeth the best chance to stay healthy. ■



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

SHOCKWAVE therapy for shoulders

Shockwave therapy is a non-invasive, evidence-based treatment for shoulder conditions such as rotator cuff tendinopathy, calcific tendinitis and adhesive capsulitis (frozen shoulder). This innovative therapy uses high-energy acoustic waves to stimulate the body's natural healing processes. Enhancing blood circulation, reducing inflammation and breaking down calcifications or scar tissue addresses the root causes of shoulder pain and stiffness, offering relief where other treatments may fall short.



Shockwave therapy promotes tissue regeneration and improves joint mobility, which is particularly effective for chronic conditions resistant to physical therapy, medication or corticosteroid injections. Each session lasts approximately 10 minutes, with most patients requiring 6-12 treatments for optimal outcomes, depending on the severity of their condition. Clinical studies indicate that 70-85% of patients with shoulder issues experience significant pain reduction and functional improvement. The procedure is safe, with minimal discomfort and no recovery time.

Check with an experienced practitioner about how they tailor each treatment plan to the patient's specific condition, ensuring a personalized approach to recovery. While not a cure-all, shockwave therapy can be a powerful tool in managing persistent shoulder pain and restoring quality of life. Potential candidates should consult with a chiropractor to determine if this treatment suits their needs. ■

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

I WOULD like to get rid of my glasses and contacts. What are my options?

There are several surgical methods available to correct eyesight. Schedule an appointment with your eye doctor to determine if you are a good candidate.

• PRK (Photo-retroactive Keratectomy):

The laser treatment is applied directly to the top surface of the cornea. The cornea is then reshaped to neutralize the prescription of one's glasses.

• **LASIK:** Corrects vision like PRK, but a small, hinged flap is made in the epithelium. After the laser treatment, the flap is replaced. This offers much less discomfort than PRK.

• **LASEK:** Similar to LASIK, but the epithelium is removed with an alcohol solution. Less discomfort than PRK, more than LASIK.

• **All-Laser LASIK:** Uses a different laser to make the flap, instead of a mechanical tool.

• **Phakic IOLs:** These are small lenses inserted inside the eye. They can correct very high amounts of near sightedness but are slightly higher in risk and significantly higher in cost.

• **Refractive Lens Exchange:** The natural lens is removed and an implant goes in its place. Again, higher risk, higher cost. ■



Information provided by Dr. Jonathan Anderson, O.D., Optometric Associates of Warren County, 1228 Sunset Drive, Suite A, Norwalk, 515-981-0224.

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REAL ESTATE

By Vonnie Potter

NEUTRAL paint helps sell faster

When listing your home, few upgrades offer a better return than a fresh coat of neutral paint. Real estate professionals consistently report that homes with well-chosen neutral colors sell faster and often for higher prices than those with bold or personalized palettes.



Top five paint colors for quick sales:

1. **Sherwin Williams Alabaster (SW 7008)** – Slightly warm undertones create a welcoming atmosphere, ideal for homes with northern exposure.
2. **Behr Ultra Pure White (1850)** – A crisp, contemporary white that maximizes light in smaller or dim spaces.
3. **Benjamin Moore Simply White (OC-117)** – Subtle yellow tones pair well with Colonial and Craftsman homes.
4. **Sherwin Williams Greek Villa (SW 7551)** – Offers sophisticated warmth without looking yellow, great for open layouts.
5. **Behr Swiss Coffee (12)** – Soft greige tones blend well with both traditional wood and modern finishes.

Choosing the right finish: Use flat or matte for ceilings, eggshell for walls, satin for moderate traffic, semi-gloss for trim, and high-gloss for details. ■

Information provided by Vonnie Potter, SRES, MA "Advocating Smart Home Choices for Our Community," 515-710-3722, www.vonniepotters.com, vonnie@iowarealty.com, Iowa Realty, 200 Army Post Road, Suite 60, Des Moines, Iowa 50315. Source: HGTV's real estate experts and a survey of 71 interior design professionals, these neutral whites consistently help homes sell faster.

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PLAN AHEAD

By Kathy Dunbar

THE GIFT of funeral preplanning

As you enjoy the beautiful Iowa summer and time with family and friends, think about giving them the gift of having your final arrangements planned. There are so many things that can be done, whether or not you choose to take advantage of your funeral home's prepayment options.



Determine how you want your life to be celebrated and get those wishes on file with your funeral home of choice.

Get your personal information recorded and on file with your funeral home of choice.

Write your own obituary. You have lived a full life, and there are things you may want mentioned that others may not remember when a funeral home's services will be needed. Get that information on file with your funeral home of choice.

As we like to say to the folks who we have the privilege to serve, we will take as much information as you will give us. Even if you have that special file in your own home where all your important information resides, get that information on file with the funeral home. The funeral home is the place where this information will be needed, and it helps make things so much easier for the family when the funeral home already has these important pieces of information at their fingertips.

I will say it again...planning ahead is a gift. ■

Information provided by Kathy Dunbar, Advanced Planning Counselor, Hamilton's on Westown Parkway, 3601 Westown Parkway, West Des Moines, 515-697-3681

CUSTOM earmolds provide superior protection, comfort

Audiologists agree:

Protecting your hearing should play a more important role in your day-to-day life. Music devices played at high volumes, sporting events, rock concerts, noisy workplace environments and hunting all pose a serious risk to your hearing health. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 17% of adults ages 20 to 69 — approximately 26 million people — have suffered permanent hearing damage due to excessive noise exposure.¹ Custom earmolds provide a simple, inexpensive and effective solution.

Everybody's ears are uniquely shaped. Because of this, one-size-fits-all headphones, hearing devices and earplugs don't always function the way they should. Inexpensive



earmolds provide a custom-fitted solution that can be used in a variety of ways. Industrial workers, musicians, law enforcement officers, pilots, dentists, military personnel and hunters would all benefit from a custom noise suppression mold. These earmolds can also be useful for earbuds, hearing devices, cellphone and Bluetooth accessories, motorsports and swimmers, who must contend with the risk of swimmer's ear.

Most earmolds are manufactured with open vents that vary in size based on patient needs. Those with larger vents are known as open fit, allowing low-frequency sounds to exit the mold naturally. These are recommended for people with good hearing in low pitches. Venting also contributes to a more natural sound quality and less occlusion (that "plugged up" feeling). Custom molds are similar to common earplugs and can be inserted and removed easily.

Comfortable and convenient, custom

earmolds can be crafted from a variety of materials. Your audiologist will give you options to choose from that may include acrylic, soft vinyl, silicone and polyethylene. Once the material is chosen, an impression of your ears will be taken using a putty-like silicone that will be used to create your final custom mold. This process takes about 30 minutes. After the impression is made, a replica of your ear shape is sent to the manufacturer, who will create the custom mold based on the unique shape of your ears. You should receive your molds in two to three weeks. Aesthetics, comfort, acoustics and a superior seal are all reasons an earmold can be advantageous to maintaining your healthy listening lifestyle. ■

Information provided by Dr. Kelly Cook, Audiologist, Iowa Hearing Center, 1228 Sunset Drive, Suite B, Norwalk, (515) 416-5990, www.IowaHearingCenter.com. 1. CDC. (2022). Preventing noise-induced hearing loss. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/hearingloss/noise.html>



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STAY connected

Upcoming events and where to find them

As the summer season kicks off, now is the perfect time to stay connected to what is happening throughout our region — Norwalk, Cumming, Martensdale and Prole. Whether you are a longtime resident, a new neighbor or just visiting, we've made it easier than ever to discover both chamber-hosted events and community gatherings all in one place.



Two websites, one connected community

To stay up to date, bookmark NorwalkChamber.org and EnjoyNorwalk.org. Together, these calendars showcase a range of events, from professional gatherings and small business celebrations to family-friendly activities and seasonal markets.

At NorwalkChamber.org, you'll find details on chamber events that bring our business community together — networking lunches, ribbon cuttings, educational series and signature events, such as the Warren County Women's Mentoring event and RUNorwalk.

Meanwhile, EnjoyNorwalk.org showcases outdoor concerts, trail rides, local festivals, vendor markets and pop-ups. This calendar features happenings across Norwalk, Cumming, Martensdale and Prole. It is your go-to spot for planning a weekend outing or discovering something new close to home.

Hosting something great? Share it.

If you are organizing a public event in our region, you can submit it to either of our websites. It is a great way to increase visibility, attract attendees and support the vibrant energy of our local communities. Both calendars are free to use and open to event submissions from businesses, nonprofits and local organizations.

What's ahead?

Our Summer Shop Hop runs from June 15 to July 15, giving you a fun way to explore local boutiques, bars and restaurants with prizes and perks along the way. We are also relocating our Ember Market + Friends event this fall to the Gregg Young Sports Campus.

Whether you're searching for a new networking opportunity, planning a family day out, or looking to explore more of what makes our area special, start with NorwalkChamber.org and EnjoyNorwalk.org. Everything you need to know is just a click away.

If you're local, you know how special our area is, and if you're visiting, you will feel right at home here. ■

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

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OUT & ABOUT

GRAND Opening

Goodwill Norwalk Store & Donation Center, 1120 Sunset Drive, Norwalk, held a grand opening on May 15.



Dawn Neville, Alexis Groenenboom, Crystal Booth and Will Schneller



Amanda Koch, Jonathan Henson and Scott Doup



Trinity Dunn and Violet Gutierrez



Kelsey Baker and Paige Schnathorst



Misty Jones and Teresa Burke



Sherrie Langlois, Jennifer Midgorden and Luke Rohe



Sean Meyer, Jacob Welch and Karen Dutcher



Nicole Steward and Sadmir Omerhodzic



Abby Lingard, Olivia Tomlinson and Tyanna Holker



Joe Mann, Mary Hunter and Jonathan Henson

OUT & ABOUT



Steph Bintner and Nikki Huett at the Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce pop-up event, Blooms and Bites, at Bellflower on May 20.



Jill Patava and Tim Clinker at the Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce pop-up event, Blooms and Bites, at Bellflower on May 20.



Angie Croll and Danielle Bloxham at the Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce pop-up event, Blooms and Bites, at Bellflower on May 20.



Mel Guanci and Tai Leui at the Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce pop-up event, Blooms and Bites, at Bellflower on May 20.



Steph Bintner, Martha Munro and Nikki Huett at the Norwalk Area Chamber of Commerce pop-up event, Blooms and Bites, at Bellflower on May 20.



Chris Cataldo, Chief Greg Staples and Tai Lieu at the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Norwalk Seasonal Services and Creative Nature on May 7.



Clayton, Blair, Amanda and Allie Garrison at the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Norwalk Seasonal Services and Creative Nature on May 7.



Dan Obley, Ann Meyerring and Jason Siemens at the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Norwalk Seasonal Services and Creative Nature on May 7.



Natalie Cummings and James Spooner at the Norwalk Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Norwalk Seasonal Services and Creative Nature on May 7.



Norwalk Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Norwalk Seasonal Services and Creative Nature on May 7.

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FINANCIAL

The COVID crisis has cost us all something. Many have lost jobs and financial security. Have \$10K In Debt? Credit Cards. Medical Bills. Car Loans. Call NATIONAL DEBT RELIEF! We can help! Get a FREE debt relief quote: Call 1-866-552-0649. (mcn)

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Portable Oxygen Concentrator May Be Covered by Medicare! Reclaim independence and mobility with the compact design and long-lasting battery of Inogen One. Free information kit! Call 877-305-1535 (ACP)

Inflation is at 40 year highs. Interest rates are way up. Credit cards. Medical bills. Car loans. Do you have \$10k or more in debt? Call National Debt Relief and find out how to pay off your debt for significantly less than what you owe! Free quote: Call 1-844-955-4930 (ACP)

We buy houses for cash as is! No repairs. No fuss. Any condition. Easy three step process: Call, get cash offer & get paid. Get your fair cash offer today by calling Liz Buys Houses: 1-844-877-5833 (ACP)

Don't let the stairs limit your mobility! Discover the ideal solution for anyone who struggles on the stairs, is concerned about a fall or wants to regain access to their entire home. Call AmeriGlide today! 1-833-399-3595 (ACP)

Home break-ins take less than 60 seconds.

Don't wait! Protect your family, your home, your assets now for as little as 70¢/day! 1-844-591-7951 (ACP)

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

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

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

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

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

Wesley Financial Group, LLC Timeshare Cancellation Experts Over \$50,000,000 in timeshare debt & fees cancelled in 2019. Get free info package & learn how to get rid of your timeshare! Free consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. 833-308-1971 (ACP)

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

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

Dental insurance from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage for 400+ procedures. Real dental insurance - not just a discount plan. Get your free Information Kit with details! 1-855-526-1060 www.dental50plus.com/ads #6258 (ACP)

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

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

SERVICE DIRECTORY

AGING ROOF? NEW HOMEOWNER? STORM DAMAGE? You need a local expert provider that proudly stands behind their work. Fast, free estimate. Financing available. Call 1-888-878-9091 Have zip code of property ready when calling! (ACP)

Water damage cleanup & restoration: A small amount of water can lead to major damage in your home. Our trusted professionals do complete repairs to protect your family and your home's value! Call 24/7: 1-833-887-0117. Have zip code of service location ready when you call! (ACP)

Congratulations

CLASS OF 2025!



WONDER
FOSTER CURIOSITY. EMBRACE THE UNKNOWN.

NORWALK COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2025



RECOGNIZING JILL ANDERSON

Jill Anderson, a dedicated educator at Norwalk from 1989 to 2023, has been honored as a 2025 Wall of Fame Inductee. She was formally recognized during the Norwalk graduation ceremony on May 25, 2025, celebrating her lasting impact on students and the school community.



Photos by: Carrie Krupke, Norwalk High School Photography Teacher

FOR THE Love



OF NORWALK
FAMILY FAIR & 5K
JUNE 28TH, 2025

Join us for a day filled with fun, fitness, & family!

Kick off your weekend at our community 5K WALK/RUN — perfect for all paces and ages. After crossing the finish line, dive into the action at our lively FAMILY FAIR! Kids will love the FREE Game Zone packed with exciting activities and giant inflatables, plus their very own KIDS RUN! Feeling hungry? Swing by for a mouthwatering meal hot off the grill, available for purchase from Pentico Bros Catering.

SCAN THE CODE FOR MORE INFO!

Proceeds from the 5k & Kids Run go to the 'Love Norwalk' Fund which is invested locally to assist individuals, families, & organizations for community betterment.



We Invite You To Join Us For Worship!
• SUNDAYS 8:30 & 10:30 AM •

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✉ contact@fellowshipnorwalk.org • [f](https://www.facebook.com/fellowshipnorwalk) [i](https://www.instagram.com/fellowshipnorwalk) [X](https://www.tiktok.com/@fellowshipnorwalk) [fellowshipnrwlk](https://www.youtube.com/fellowshipnorwalk)