

ALTOONA

JUNE 2025

Living

MAGAZINE

SURVIVING and thriving

**Local cancer
survivors share
their stories of
strength and
resilience**

Meet Brynn Beresford
EDUCATION

**Renaud celebrates
a century**
NEIGHBOR

**Scotcheroos are
a family tradition**
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WELCOME

THE TRIALS and tribulations made them stronger

A few decades ago, my dad and I had a conversation about the tremendous health care costs that are associated with medical treatments for cancer patients. Being a naïve and overconfident young man, I expressed my concern over how we are all paying for these costs through higher insurance costs in our own plans.

My dad, who was not a wealthy man but was wise, told me he was glad to pay his share and that he was thankful he had not needed the treatments.

A few years later, Dad was diagnosed with bladder cancer. A few years after that, despite a valiant fight against it, the disease had spread throughout his body and took his life.

Unfortunately, my dad's story is not unique. Almost 10 million people die of cancer worldwide each year, including more than 600,000 Americans. But this is not a message about death. Rather, it is about beating cancer.

In the United States alone, more than 18 million people are cancer survivors, and this number is projected to grow to 26 million by 2040. Each year, many individuals live five or more years after their cancer diagnosis, contributing to the overall number of survivors.

You likely know some of these heroes. You may even be one.

In our cover story this month, we share the victorious stories from some of the folks who received the news we all hope we never have to hear. The adage says, "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger." The trials and tribulations these survivors faced certainly made them stronger, and they serve as role models for those of us who may face the same challenge — and even those of us who, hopefully, never have to.

Thanks for reading. ■

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HPV VACCINATION

Help Protect Against Cancer

Human papillomavirus (HPV) infections may be common. Fortunately, the HPV vaccine prevents the virus and the cancers it can cause.

WHO SHOULD GET VACCINATED?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the HPV vaccine for boys and girls, starting as early as age 9 and through age 26.

IOWA

Health and
Human Services



Ask your child's
healthcare provider
about the HPV vaccine.

Source: cdc.gov 4/25

SURVIVING and thriving

Local cancer survivors share their stories of strength and resilience

By Sean Dengler

As has been widely reported in recent months, Iowa continues to have the second-highest age-adjusted rate of new cancers in the U.S. and is one of only two states — the other being Kentucky — with a rising rate, according to the Cancer in Iowa Report produced by the Iowa Cancer Registry (see full report at <https://shri.public-health.uiowa.edu/cancer-data/reports/iowa-cancer-reports>). An estimated 21,200 Iowans will be diagnosed with new, invasive cancers this year. Yet, with cancer screenings and improved treatment methods, more Iowans are joining the estimated 171,535 cancer survivors living in the state now.



Shirley Ryan is grateful to be able to focus on her grandsons after winning her battle against cancer.

Having the right mindset

Arlyn Morris says her mindset played a big part in her recovery after being diagnosed with breast cancer in 2021 at the age of 55 during a routine mammogram. Thankfully, it is now in remission.

"I have become accustomed to the phrase, 'Well, that is unusual,' " Morris says. "There is one lesson I have practiced most of my adult life, and that is to find the fun among the yucky stuff, for there will be lots of yucky stuff."

This mindset helped when going through treatment.

"For example, my hair," Morris mentions. "I started losing my hair fairly quickly after the first chemotherapy session. I began my treatment expecting to lose the hair on my head and geared up for it both mentally and physically. My girls helped me pick out my first wig, and I practiced wearing it. From there, I found it quite fun to try different hair colors and styles that I likely would not have done with my own hair. But, when I can change out my hair like I change my clothes, I revel in the fun of it. I have discovered hats to be entertaining as well."

Morris took pride in her appearance.

"I did not care for the sickly bald cancer patient's look and the type of attention it drew," she says. "So, I dress to conceal the devastating side effects cancer treatment has caused. Sometimes, it is like going incognito in public."

When she receives a compliment, it is gratifying.

"When someone says, 'Wow, you look good for what you have been through,' I smile and think to myself, 'Yes! I pulled off looking like a normal human being,' " Morris says.

She also appreciates the support she received from her family, "God's tender mercies," Can Do Cancer and Above + Beyond Cancer. Through the latter organization, she was introduced to urban pole walking. This kept her going through her cancer treatments and recovery. She also is appreciative of other support she received, such as her mail carrier bringing the mail to her door and having a quick chat.

While battling cancer is an experience no one wants to have, Morris says she has learned more about herself on this journey.

"I'm not done fighting," she exclaims. "I went into the journey with a ton of support from friends, family and my local community. I have definitely become more grateful and see



Arlyn Morris says humor and a positive attitude helped her cope. After losing her hair, she wore fun hats and enjoyed changing out wigs for new looks.

God's hands in the way things play out. My Faith in God has always been by my side. This has just given me unusual opportunities to rely on and prove that faith."

Early detection

Getting a mammogram is vital, and Michelle Smith, who recently moved from Kansas City to Altoona, caught her cancer in its early stages. She was diagnosed with Stage 0 ductal carcinoma in situ in October 2019, which was detected by her first mammogram. After this discovery, the process moved quickly.

"The doctor called me shortly after the mammogram to tell me that I had very dense breast tissue, but they also found three areas that looked suspicious on my left breast. They wanted to send me to a breast surgeon for a biopsy of the areas right away," she says.

"I went and met with the surgeon immediately and did the biopsy on all of the areas they found. Unfortunately, they came back with grade level 3 (highest probability

to spread), and they were just starting to go invasive."

Smith, who was 43 at the time, proceeded with a mastectomy and reconstructive surgery. Recovery was painful, and she had to sleep upright in a chair for weeks for proper healing. Despite the difficulties, the surgery was a success.

"I did get results soon after the surgery that the lymph nodes they tested under my arm were all clear. This was great news, as it meant the cancer had not spread. We caught it just in time," Smith says. "Since I had done the mastectomy, and they were able to get the clear margins, I did not need to do radiation or chemo. I was very excited for that."

For those going through a similar experience, Smith has advice.

"Lean on your friends and family. Take it one day at a time to get through it all," she says. "Be open and honest with those who are part of your healthcare team. Also, get involved in support groups. There are many support groups out there to help you not go through it alone."

FEATURE

Smith says going through this experience has changed her.

“Being diagnosed with breast cancer has made me a much stronger person,” she says. “I know I can face anything now. It’s important for me to spread awareness, especially about how mammograms can save lives. They told me that if I had not done my mammogram when I did, the outcome would have been much worse.”

A whirlwind

Shirley Ryan says, when you mix a derecho, COVID and cancer, it can be quite a whirlwind.

“First of all, I was losing my job,” she says. “I was living in Cedar Rapids at the time, and I wanted to get all my things done like my annual checkup and all that good stuff. I had moved it up a little bit.”

Ryan, who was 63, had been watching television more during COVID and noticed that her neck looked different from the actors she was watching.

Her thyroid seemed “heavier, thicker, fuller.” She had it checked out, and doctors discovered she had thyroid



Michelle Smith commemorated her battle with cancer by getting a meaningful tattoo.



Through a routine mammogram, Michelle Smith, pictured with her husband, Chris, was able to catch her cancer in its early stages.

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FEATURE

cancer. Surgery to remove her thyroid followed soon after the diagnosis.

Despite the derecho and COVID, she moved to Des Moines to be closer to her kids, who live in Altoona and Clive. After beating the thyroid cancer, she had a recent brush with another form of cancer in 2024.

"I was having some stomach issues," Ryan says. "I went in to have it checked out, and they determined after tests that it was diverticulitis. But they found something suspicious. I had to have an MRI, and they determined that I had kidney cancer on my right kidney. That was in March of 2024. On April 17, 2024, I had my right kidney removed."

Throughout her cancer battles, Ryan has maintained a positive outlook.

"I didn't have negative feelings that I was going to die tomorrow," she says. "It's like, OK, you know

what? Take care of it and move on. Maybe just having a positive attitude, that wasn't going to bring me down."

Crediting her faith, family, friends and her doctors, Ryan noted it is important to have a strong support system. Going through these cancer battles and now living in Altoona to be closer to her kids and grandsons has been the dream.

"I am where I belong, close to family and present for the moments that matter. My grandsons, now 6 and 4, live less than a mile from me, and I cherish being there for sporting and church events, as well as taking them to and from school.

"The boys and I treasure our one-on-one sleepovers, enjoying special time together. We love going on walks and serving as community helpers by picking up in my 40-unit HOA," she says. "Being close to my grandsons always make my days happier, with lots of hugs and kisses." ■



Shirley Ryan emphasizes the importance of her family's support during her cancer treatments and recovery.

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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 skimp 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!

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CITY OF ALTOONA IS HIRING!

The City of Altoona is hiring a **Assistant Finance Director**. Under the general direction of the Finance Director, oversee the day-to-day operations of the Finance Department including accounts payable, utility billing, payroll, and cash collections. Assist the Finance Director with the City's annual fiscal budget, bank reconciliation, cash management, debt issuance, investments, financial policies and reports.

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WE'RE HIRING!

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PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

The City of Altoona will be holding a Public Hearing to review an application for a State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan and to make available to the public the contents of an environmental information document and the City's project plan. These documents include design and environmental information related to the proposed improvements to the City's water supply system.

The proposed project includes construction of a new water treatment facility (Water Treatment Plant No. 4), supplied by two new groundwater wells (Well No. 5 and Well No. 6) using water from the Cambrian-Ordovician (Jordan) aquifer. The project will also include approximately 6,800 LF of raw

water transmission main from Well No. 5 to Water Treatment Plant No. 4 and approximately 9,500 LF of finished water mains from Water Treatment Plant No. 4 to connect to the City's water distribution system, constructed with a combination of open cut and trenchless methods and all necessary connections and appurtenances.

The purpose of this Public Hearing is to inform area residents of the community of Altoona of this proposed action, discuss the actual cost and user fees associated with this project, and to address citizen's concerns, if any, with the plan.

THE PUBLIC HEARING LOCATION AND TIME ARE AS FOLLOWS:

- July 7, 2025 – 6:30 p.m.
- Altoona City Hall
- 900 Venbury Drive
- Altoona, Iowa 50009

All interested persons are encouraged to attend this hearing. Written comments on this proposal may also be submitted prior to the hearing. Questions regarding this hearing or the availability of documentation may be directed to the Utility Department at 515-967-4464. Additionally, public comments can be sent to SRF-PC@dnr.iowa.gov.

A PDF COPY OF THIS HEARING CAN BE FOUND AT
cms2.revize.com/revize/altoona/news_detail_T2_R241.php



ALTOONA AQUATICS PARK

With summer here, don't forget to check out the Altoona Aquatics Park! Park hours are Monday-Friday 12pm-6pm and 11am-6pm on Saturday and Sundays.

Seasons passes are also available!



THE JULY FOURTH PARADE IS COMING!

We're excited to have you join us for the Altoona 4th of July Parade—a community tradition filled with fun, patriotism, and celebration!

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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.

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

MEET Brynn Beresford

K-5 multilingual educator partners with teachers.

From a young age, Brynn Beresford knew she had a passion for working with children. Beresford grew up helping with her church's nursery. As she got older, she continued this passion by babysitting, accepting her first job at a daycare center and working at a childcare center during breaks and summers while in college. These experiences reinforced Beresford's belief that working with children was what she was meant to do.

"Their curiosity, resilience and excitement for learning inspire me every day, and I feel grateful to play a role in helping them grow into who they are meant to be," Beresford says.

Beresford was first introduced to the Southeast Polk district when she student taught at Four Mile Elementary School and says she immediately felt at home. After graduating from Iowa State University, she continued at the school as a building substitute for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year. Beresford then spent three years with the Des Moines Public Schools before returning to the district. This past school year was her first as a K-5 multilingual teacher at both Clay Elementary and Runnells Elementary.

"One of the things I appreciate most about working with the district is how much everyone truly cares — about the students and about each other. As an ESOL teacher at both Clay and Runnells Elementary, I was welcomed so warmly, and that strong sense of community has never faded. Having the support, encouragement and resources I need has made it possible for me to grow as an educator and do my very best for the kids we serve," Beresford says.

Beresford says she enjoys working with elementary students because they are fun to be around and are excited to learn. She spends much of her day partnering with classroom teachers to make sure multilingual learners are given the support needed to thrive. Beresford likes working alongside students during core instruction, working with small groups, or meeting one on one with students to help them build skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

"At this age, their minds are so open and receptive, especially when it comes to learning new languages. It's incredibly rewarding to see their growth happen right in front of you — their curiosity, energy and enthusiasm make every day feel new and meaningful. Being part of their journey at such an important stage is truly something special," Beresford says.

"As an educator, one of the greatest rewards is witnessing my students' growth and celebrating their successes — whether they've mastered a new concept, met a personal goal, or simply found pride in their own progress. These moments affirm the importance of the work we do," Beresford says. ■



Brynn Beresford, pictured with fiancé Ricardo Laventure, says she is inspired by her students' curiosity, resilience and excitement for learning.

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RAISING awareness of Alzheimer's disease

Alzheimer's disease is a condition that profoundly affects millions of people worldwide, touching the lives of both those diagnosed and their caregivers. As we approach June, Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month, it is an essential time to reflect on the significance of education, early detection and compassionate care.



What is Alzheimer's disease?

Alzheimer's is a progressive brain disorder that gradually impairs memory, cognitive abilities and daily functioning. It is the most common cause of dementia among older adults. While aging is the biggest risk factor, Alzheimer's is NOT a normal part of getting older. Genetics, lifestyle choices and environmental influences all play a role in its development.

Symptoms often begin subtly: forgetting familiar names, struggling to complete daily tasks or repeating conversations. Over time, these difficulties worsen, affecting independence and the ability to communicate.

The importance of early detection

Recognizing the early signs of Alzheimer's can make a significant difference. Seeking a medical evaluation when memory problems first appear can lead to an early diagnosis, allowing patients and their families to plan for care, explore treatment options, and maintain a higher quality of life for as long as possible.

While there is currently no cure, medications and therapeutic approaches can help manage symptoms and improve cognitive function. The earlier interventions are introduced, the better chance individuals have of maintaining clarity and engagement with loved ones.

Supporting caregivers

Caregiving for someone with Alzheimer's is an emotional and physical journey that requires patience and resilience. Caregivers often experience stress, exhaustion and emotional strain. Finding a strong support system, whether through family, community resources or caregiver networks, can make a tremendous difference. Practical strategies for caregivers include:

- Maintaining routine: A consistent schedule reduces confusion and provides comfort.
- Creating a safe environment: Removing hazards and simplifying tasks can prevent accidents.
- Practicing self-care: Taking breaks and seeking emotional support are crucial for avoiding burnout.

Raising awareness and advocacy

Public awareness plays a vital role in Alzheimer's research and support. Every individual can contribute to the cause, whether by educating others or advocating for better care policies.

In honor of Alzheimer's Awareness month, let's take time to acknowledge the challenges of Alzheimer's while fostering hope. Through continued research, education and compassionate support, we can work toward a future where Alzheimer's is no longer a devastating diagnosis but a condition with solutions and understanding.

"To care for those who once cared for us is one of the highest honors."

-Tia Walker ■

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

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RENAUD celebrates a century

Lasting relationships continue to bring joy.

Sally Renaud enjoys being surrounded by family and friends, and now, as she approaches a milestone birthday, the community has one more reason to celebrate her remarkable life.

Renaud turns 100 years old this month, and a small celebration was held in her honor on Friday, June 20, in the party room at Perkins in Altoona, her favorite spot.

Renaud and her late husband, Howard, spent their life together farming and raising their children in the Bondurant area. Over the years, they became familiar faces around town, and today, Renaud lives with her daughter and son-in-law.

Those who know Renaud say her warmth and kindness leave a lasting impression.

She has been a lifelong friend to Bill Hansen. Renaud's mother and Hansen's mother were the best of friends, and, over time, a tight-knit group of four or five couples formed.

They were nearly inseparable, sharing holidays, everyday joys, and life's many ups and downs. Renaud is now the only surviving member of that group.

But their legacy lives on. The children of those couples have continued the tradition, taking Renaud out to lunch a few times each year to reminisce and stay connected through the bond their parents forged so many decades ago.

One of Renaud's longtime wishes was "to live to be 100 years old." And now, that wish is coming true — with many who love her confident she'll surpass it.

Those who remember Renaud from Altoona or simply through the many lives she's touched are invited to wish her a happy birthday.

After all, it's not every day a centenarian is honored. ■



Sally Renaud with lifetime friend Bill Hansen, the son of a couple Sally and her husband were good friends with.

COMMUNITY

ROTARY Club donates park bench

The East Polk Rotary Club has donated a modern park bench for city park users to enjoy with their family and friends at the entrance to the new pickleball courts at Ironwood Park.

This bench was donated in memory of Corrine Lambert, a long-time past member, who gave tirelessly of her time and talents to help this community become a better place to live.

This project is only one of many club projects, including the sponsorship of scholarships to the Industrial Tech Expo at Southeast Polk High School, donations to Caring Hands and support of various area homeless shelters.

Club member Tom Bylund said, "We have a dedicated group of members who are generous with their time and money to make these social need projects a reality." ■



Members of the East Polk Rotary Club gather for the donation of a park bench in memory of Corrine Lambert, a long-time member.

ALTOONA Public Library news

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

Altoona Public Library

700 Eighth St. S.W., Altoona
515-967-3881
www.altoonalibrary.com
Monday - Thursday: 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Friday - Saturday: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday: 2-5 p.m.

Dungeons & Dragons Day

– All Ages

Saturday, July 27, from 2-5 p.m.

Join us for a celebration of all things Dungeons & Dragons. Whether you're a seasoned adventurer or fresh out of the academy, we'll have activities for players of all ages, including snacks, crafts, puzzles and prizes. Drop-in event for all ages, no registration required.

Adult programming – ages 18-plus

Self-Defense Basics

Thursday, July 10, at 6 p.m.

Join officers from the Altoona Police Department as they walk us through the basics of self-defense and how to best protect ourselves in everyday life. Registration required.

Intro to Crochet

Saturday, July 19, at 1 p.m.

We'll focus on beginning techniques. By the end of the program, you'll have all the skills you need to crochet a basic project. We'll provide a crochet hook and enough yarn to get you started. Registration required.

All About AI

Thursday, July 24, at 6:30 p.m.

AI (artificial intelligence) is everywhere, but what exactly is it? Learn how AI is being used all around you, tips to spot AI, ethical issues, if and when it should be used, and how to apply the power of AI at work and home. Registration required.

Children's programming

Puzzle Makers

Wednesday, July 9, from 2-3 p.m.

Come to the library and test out different ways to make your very own puzzle. Ages 5-12. No registration required.

Preschool Picasso

Tuesday, July 22, from 10-11 a.m.

Enjoy a story about a famous artist and then create your own masterpieces. Ages 5 and younger. Registration required.

Storytime with ICUBlind

Wednesday, July 23, from 1-2 p.m.

Join us to explore braille, meet a service dog, and hear some stories about life as a blind person. Ages 12 and younger. No registration required.

Teen programming – grades 6-12

Interactive Movie Night

Friday, July 11, from 6-7:45 p.m.

Shout, sing and snack as you watch a movie. You'll receive props and instructions to interact with the movie, and snacks will be provided. Registration required.

Teen Self-Defense

Monday, July 14, from 6-7:30 p.m.


Join us as the Altoona Fire Department guides us through the basics of self-defense. They'll go over self-awareness safety tips and talk about basic self-defense techniques, ending with a hands-on exercise. Registration required.

Teen Paint and Sip

Monday, July 21, from 3-4 p.m.

Turn your pet or favorite animal into a pop-art-style work of art. Send in a picture of your pet or favorite animal, and we'll have everything ready for you to create your masterpiece as you sip a delicious beverage. Registration required.

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



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Polk County Invests in Affordable Housing Initiatives & Homeless Shelter

Polk County Board of Supervisors distributing more than \$44 million on Affordable Housing initiatives & investing in critical infrastructure repairs at Central Iowa Shelter & Services' downtown Des Moines Homeless Shelter. Below are some initiatives Polk County has invested in using one-time federal funding.

Monarch Apartments (4845 Merle Hay Rd, Des Moines)



Anawim Housing converted a former hotel into permanent housing for those experiencing homelessness & offering wrap-around services

42 total housing units

Polk County's commitment: \$1 million

Goldfinch Lofts (3404 Ingersoll Ave, Des Moines)



Cutler Development's Goldfinch Lofts will be the first in the country that is carbon neutral certified and Iowa's first Passive House certified (for extremely high-efficient operational systems).

28 total housing units

Polk County's commitment: \$1 million

Central Iowa Shelter & Services' Downtown Des Moines Homeless Shelter (1420 Mulberry St, Des Moines)



Supporting critical repairs including HVAC, plumbing, electrical, kitchen repairs, and security upgrades

Polk County's commitment: \$817,333.93

"Access to affordable housing is one of the single most important issues facing this country," said Board Chair Matt McCoy. "Polk County is fortunate to have this one-time federal funds to invest in affordable housing initiatives and those experiencing homelessness, because wherever you're at in life, everyone deserves to have a roof over your head."

- Matt McCoy





Community Highlights

Anawim Supportive Hotel-to-Housing Initiative Launches in Des Moines

Polk County Supervisors Matt McCoy and Angela Connolly joined other community leaders to celebrate the grand opening of The Monarch Apartments, the latest achievement in supportive housing spearheaded by Anawim Housing. This innovative hotel-to-housing conversion aims to offer stable, long-term accommodation to 40 individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness. By leveraging funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Polk County has played a pivotal role in bringing this project to fruition. These efforts not only provide residents with much-needed housing but also offer a pathway toward enhanced independence and overall well-being.



Polk County and Ankeny Inaugurate Fourmile Creek Wetland Project

The Fourmile Creek Watershed Management Authority proudly dedicated the Creekview Stormwater Wetland, a landmark collaborative initiative between Polk County and the City of Ankeny. This ambitious project introduces a vast stormwater wetland meticulously crafted to manage urban runoff from approximately 423 acres of pre-regulation developments. Spanning 15 acres, the wetland incorporates key design features, including a precisely sized forebay, intricate micro-topography, and an innovative stream diversion structure. The dedication ceremony offered attendees a unique perspective with a hayrack ride tour, providing an up-close look at the transformational new wetland.



Open House Held for Center at Sixth Development

Polk County Board Chair Matt McCoy had the honor of speaking at the unveiling of the Center at Sixth Development, located along the vibrant 6th Ave. corridor in Des Moines. Proudly backed by Polk County's funding, this unique development aims to empower local minority entrepreneurs. The 9,000-square-foot space will blend innovation and community by offering live/work units alongside a dynamic mixed-use incubator tailored for local artists, chefs, and retailers. This groundbreaking project is poised to serve as a catalyst for revitalizing Des Moines' 6th Avenue corridor, fostering growth and opportunity in the area.



Polk County Gifts Adaptive Bikes to Ankeny Schools

Polk County Supervisor Mark Holm proudly awarded a Polk County Community Betterment Grant to Ankeny High School, marking a significant step towards inclusivity. The grant will fund the introduction of adaptive bikes, designed to empower students who are wheelchair-bound or have other special needs, enabling their active participation in school activities. This initiative underscores a commitment to ensuring accessibility and inclusivity for all students, fostering a more supportive and engaging educational environment.



Character Counts Expansion Supported by Community Funding

Polk County Supervisors are thrilled to back the expansion of the Character Counts initiative, made achievable through generous grants and support from local organizations such as Prairie Meadows and Polk County. This expansion aims to extend the program's influence, reaching more than 30% of classrooms statewide. The program offers early childhood kits centered around the six pillars of character, provided at no cost to classrooms. These kits include comprehensive lesson plans, family guides, music, and posters. Educators can benefit from on-site training at the Robert D. and Billie Ray Center at Drake University or participate in convenient webinars, ensuring impactful and widespread character education.



Be sure to check for cancellations.

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

Coming up in the Altoona 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.

RV Camping: Do you enjoy packing up the RV and heading out on the open road for vacation? Share with us why you think RVing is the way to go and the adventures you've discovered. Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com with your stories.

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."

- **July 7, 7 p.m.** First Baptist Church, 8250 N.W. 62nd St., Johnston
- **July 14, 7 p.m.** Holland Farms, 2800 Sunset Drive, Norwalk
- **July 21, 7 p.m.** Woodlands Creek, 12675 Woodlands Parkway, Clive

Brightside Market

Thursdays through Aug. 28, 5-8 p.m.

Brightside Aleworks
480 Center Place, Altoona

Enjoy the weekly farmers market along with drink and food vendors.



Music At The Park

Sundays, June 29, July 27, Aug. 24, 6-8 p.m.

Haines Park Outdoor Stage,
700 Block of Third Ave. S.E., Altoona

Enjoy free summer concerts along with pop and popcorn to be sold by CAP Theatre. June 29 features Lincoln Highway. July 27 features the band SPAM. Aug. 24 features Haywire.

Healing Hearts Grief Support

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

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



Altoona Citywide Garage Sales

Thursday, July 10 -
Saturday, July 12

Take advantage of Altoona's citywide garage sale to draw crowds to your sale or to enjoy hunting for treasures.

Urbandale Summer Concert Series

Various dates, 6:30-8 p.m.
Charles Gabus Memorial Tree Park,
next to the Urbandale Public Library

Enjoy free, high-quality music in a family-friendly setting. Bring your lawn chair or blanket, and feel free to pack a cooler.

- Sunday, June 29: Wind and Strings - Flute and Harp Duo
- Thursday, July 10: Brass Blast Brass Band



CITYVIEW Summer Stir

Friday, July 25, 5-9 p.m.,
East Village, Des Moines

This event is a relaxed opportunity to visit many great establishments in the early evening and sample their signature Summer Stir drinks. For \$25 (prepaid online), participants will receive 10 tickets to use to sample drinks at any of the participating venues. Tickets may also be purchased at the event for \$35. All of the establishments will be within walking distance. For more information, list of participating businesses and to order tickets, visit <https://summerstirs.dmcityview.com/>.



Vendor Market at Outlets of Des Moines

Saturdays, July 12 and 19, Aug. 2 and 16, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
801 Bass Pro Drive N.W., Suite 315, Altoona

Each show has a variety of vendors from Avon, Essential Oils, freeze-dried candies, honey, 3D, gems and crystals, fudge, Scentsy plus more. Each event has different vendors. No two shows the same. Come check out the vendors and buy local. If interested in being a vendor, email k2marketplacemagic@gmail.com.

Miracle Treat Day

Thursday, July 31
Dairy Queen, 736 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona

Miracle Treat Day is a fundraiser to support local Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. Funds raised by the local DQ go to helping children being treated at the University of Iowa Hospitals. Last year, the effort raised \$358. This year's goal is \$1,000. In the month of July, customers can purchase a Children's Miracle Network Balloon for \$1 or \$3. One dollar of every blizzard sold on July 31 will go to Children's Miracle Network. Companies or groups can submit a group pre-order form to purchase blizzards for pick up on Miracle Treat Day. From 3-5 p.m., families and kids are invited to the store for temporary tattoos, stickers, coloring pages and an opportunity to decorate their own superhero mask. ■

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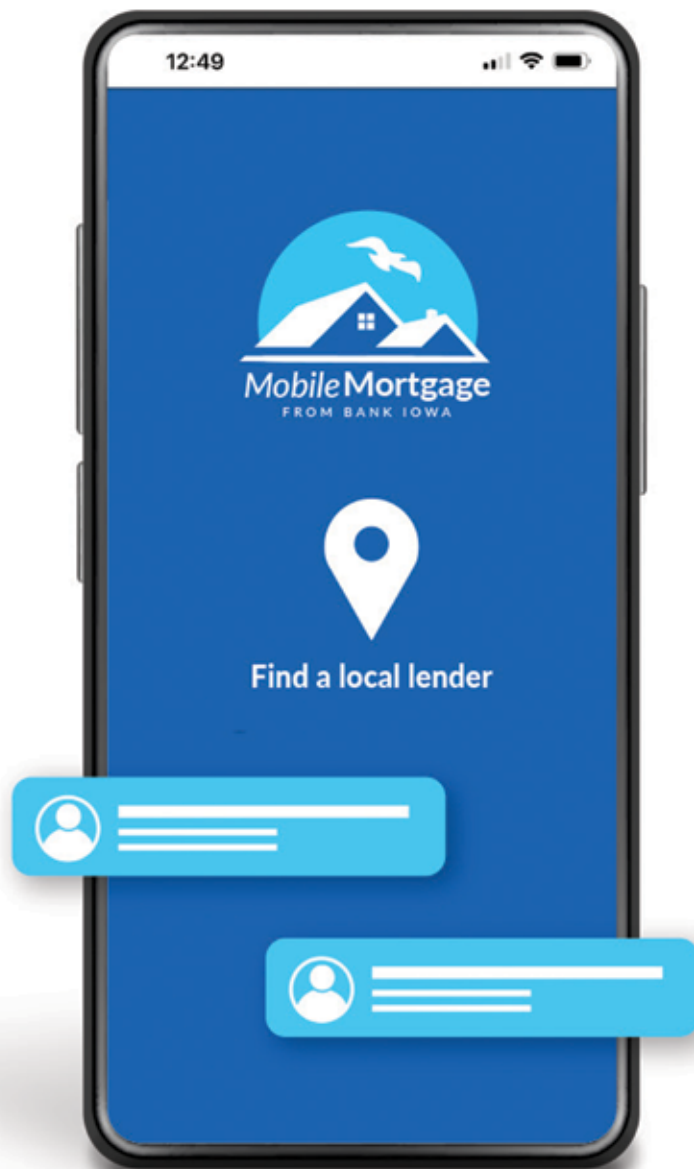


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HEALTH

By Ashley Powell

CBD AND THC for summer fun

Whether you're tackling outdoor adventures or simply soaking up the sun, CBD and THC can enhance your summer experience by supporting muscle recovery, relaxation and overall wellness. CBD is an excellent post-activity supplement, helping to reduce inflammation and muscle soreness. Whether you've been hiking, swimming or working in the yard, CBD promotes faster recovery so you can stay active without discomfort. It also aids relaxation making it easier to unwind after a long day in the heat.



THC, in low doses, can provide a subtle mood boost, enhance focus, and reduce stress, allowing you to fully engage in summer activities. Whether you're playing beach volleyball, enjoying a backyard barbecue, or heading to a music festival, THC can help you stay present and enjoy the moment.

For a balanced approach, pairing CBD beverages with THC edibles or tinctures can provide a mix of relaxation and energy, making them perfect for social gatherings, travel, or a day at the lake.

While online shopping may seem convenient, visiting a local CBD store ensures you're getting high-quality, lab-tested products tailored to your needs. In-store shopping also allows you to receive expert recommendations, sample products before committing, and discover new options suited to your lifestyle. ■

Information provided by Ashley Powell, CBD American Shaman, 800 S. 50th St., No. 106, West Des Moines, 515-380-5251, and 3418 Eighth St. S.W., No. 3, Altoona, 515-967-4036. Sources: Russo, E. B. (2008). "Cannabinoids in the Management of Difficult to Treat Pain." Therapeutics and Clinical Risk Management.

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HEALTH

By Dr. Kari Swain and Dr. Elizabeth Ellrich

CHIROPRACTIC checkups for kids

Summer break gives families the opportunity to focus on their health without the pressures of school stress and schedules. Summer is a popular time for health and wellness checkups and appointments and the ideal time to schedule a comprehensive chiropractic exam to evaluate children's nervous systems and spinal health.

Many parents assume chiropractic care is only necessary when their child complains of pain, but chiropractic care is much more than that. Neurologically focused chiropractors address nervous system dysfunction as well as structural issues. Children encounter physical, environmental and emotional stressors just as adults do. Leaving this stress unaddressed can create lasting effects on health and development. Nervous system dysfunction can manifest as digestive, immune system, behavioral, attention, emotional and sleep issues or be present with no apparent symptoms at all. Board-certified pediatric chiropractors are specially trained to identify nervous system dysfunction and provide gentle, age-appropriate adjustments.

Summer break provides the perfect environment for your child's body to adapt and heal. Without daily classroom stresses and busy schedules, the nervous system can respond more effectively to chiropractic care. Chiropractic adjustments facilitate healing and nervous system regulation. Start the school year stronger, healthier and more adaptable by creating a strong foundation this summer. Proper spinal alignment and nervous system function sets children up for success through improved attention span, better focus, decreased behavioral issues, enhanced emotional processing, strengthened immune system function, better sleep quality, support for optimal growth and development, and postural correction to counteract screen-time effects. Healthy families incorporate chiropractic care as part of their comprehensive healthcare team. ■

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

BENEFITS of medical grade retinol skin products

Retinol, a derivative of vitamin A, is widely used in skincare for its powerful anti-aging and skin-renewing effects. Here are the main benefits:

Reduces fine lines and wrinkles: Retinol stimulates collagen production, which helps improve skin elasticity and reduces the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles over time. **Improves skin texture and tone:** It promotes faster cell turnover, helping to smooth rough skin, fade dark spots, and even out skin tone. **Fights acne:** Retinol helps unclog pores, reduce inflammation and prevent future breakouts by promoting the shedding of dead skin cells. **Fades hyperpigmentation:** It can reduce sun spots, melasma and post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation by accelerating the fading of pigmented cells. **Minimizes pores. Improves skin firmness. Enhances product absorption:** By removing dead skin buildup, retinol allows other skincare ingredients to penetrate more effectively.

While effective, retinol can also cause irritation, dryness or sensitivity — especially when first introduced. Contact a skincare specialist to determine what product(s) are best suited for your skin type and how to meet your skincare goals. ■

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



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SUMMER skin myths debunked

Summer is all about sunshine and glow, but some common skincare myths can do more harm than good. Let's debunk three of the most persistent summer skin misconceptions.

1. I don't need sunscreen if it's cloudy. Clouds may block sunlight, but up to 80% of UV rays still penetrate through overcast skies. This means your skin is still at risk for sunburn, premature aging and even skin cancer. Daily SPF — rain or shine — is essential to protect your skin year-round, especially in summer when UV index levels tend to spike.

2. Tanning clears up acne. While a tan might temporarily mask redness or blemishes, UV exposure actually worsens acne in the long run. Sunlight can dry out the skin, leading to increased oil production and clogged pores. It also increases the risk of post-acne hyperpigmentation. Instead of sunbathing, opt for professional acne treatments, like DiamondGlow and non-comedogenic products.

3. Exfoliating more often is better in summer. It's tempting to scrub away sweat, sunscreen and buildup more frequently, but over-exfoliating can strip your skin barrier, leading to irritation, dryness and sensitivity — especially when combined with sun exposure. Stick to exfoliating one to two times a week using gentle products, and always follow with SPF.

The takeaway? More isn't always better when it comes to summer skincare. Stay informed, stay consistent and, when in doubt, consult a skincare professional to create a plan that's safe and effective for your skin all season long. ■

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



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10 SUMMER maintenance tips for your home

Summer is coming, which means it's time to prepare your home for the warm weather. Follow these 10 summer maintenance tips:

Clear gutters and downspouts: Gutters and downspouts can accumulate a lot of debris throughout the winter and spring. If debris is stuck in your gutters, it can cause problems like slow drainage, debris dams or water overflow. This could potentially damage your home and result in expensive repairs.

Inspect and wash windows: Wash the inside and outside of your windows to remove any buildup from cooking, fireplaces or dust that accumulated. While doing this, inspect your window screens to ensure there are no necessary repairs needed.

Clean dryer vent: To remove any built-up lint and support its efficiency, clean your



exterior dryer vent.

Test smoke and carbon monoxide detectors: While this is typically stressed during winter months, testing your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to ensure they are working is important year-round.

Clean and change HVAC filters: Change and clean your HVAC filters, vents and ducts for optimal performance. Consider scheduling a professional HVAC inspection to ensure your system is ready for the summer heat.

Service and clean your air conditioner: Depending on your air conditioner, consider hosing it down to clean any accumulated dust or debris from the winter and spring months. Cleaning the unit itself and removing any weeds around the unit will help it run more efficiently.

Adjust ceiling fans: In the summer, adjust your ceiling fans to spin counterclockwise by flipping the fan's reverse switch. This will provide a downdraft, keeping the room cool.


Seal air leaks: When temps rise, prevent drafts that cause cool air loss and increase your AC bill. You can seal any leaks with weather stripping or caulk. Taking these precautions early will keep your house cool and your energy costs down.

Inspect roof: Prior to summer storms, assess your roof to ensure there are no cracked, curled or missing shingles. If so, contact a repairman to prevent any further damage.

Trim trees: Assess the trees around your house to ensure there are no broken branches, cracks or hollowed limbs. If you do see any, prune, cut or safely remove to prevent damage.


Summer weather can bring the heat. Follow these tips to help prevent high utility bills, avoid problems down the road, and ensure your home is summer-ready. ■

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





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FAITH

By Nathan Anenson

REST for the weary parent

Parenting can be exhausting. Whether you are dealing with exploding diapers and sleepless nights, managing a schedule with a gazillion activities, or trying to understand your adult children's choices, parenting can be tiring. Jesus once said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). If you are looking for rest, here are three things Jesus might say to you.



You don't have to do everything. The pressure to do everything is intense. We don't want our kids to miss out on any opportunity that would help them succeed. So, we tend to fill our schedules and then become exhausted victims of those schedules. But we need to ask ourselves, who makes our schedules? We all have choices. You can use that powerful, two-letter word, "no." Kids need space to rest, to play without screens, and you do, too. Slowing down isn't weakness; it's wisdom.

Your kids don't define you. Kids make mistakes. We know this. So why do parents get so angry? Could it be that you feel your kids' mistakes reflect negatively on you? For example, if your kid doesn't make the top team, does it feel like YOUR value is being called into question? Or if your kid fails a test or messes up a dance routine, does it feel like it is YOUR mistake, too?

Too often, we place the responsibility for our happiness on our kids. That is such an unfair burden to place on a child. We have gotten our happiness tied up in their performance. We have gotten our sense of worth wrapped up in their success. Set yourself free from that roller coaster of emotions. Instead, find your identity and worth in knowing you are loved and forgiven by Jesus.

Come to Me. There are many ways to seek rest, but Jesus says true rest, lasting rest, is found when you come to Him. When we gather for weekly worship, Jesus promises to show up to refresh and restore us. There's just something about the songs, the prayers, the teaching and the community that rejuvenates the soul. Jesus is present, and when you are present to Him, you will find the source of rest — Jesus Himself.

Parenting can be exhausting, but Jesus offers rest for the weary by guiding parents into His truth. So come to Jesus, all you who are weary, and HE will give you rest. ■

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

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Event Details:

- No registration needed, open house event
- Bring resume and/or references, if possible
- Option to apply on-site with assistance



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Email: hr@bfschools.org

EOE / AA

THE MEANING of summer and family time

Summer isn't just a season — it's a feeling. It's the warmth of the sun on your face, the joy of laughter echoing through the backyard, and the simple, unhurried moments that bring families closer together.



What summer really means

Summer is...

- A pause from the hustle of routines and school days.
- A chance to reconnect with each other, without the pressure of deadlines.
- An invitation to slow down, breathe deeply and savor life's little joys.

For kids, summer feels like freedom — freedom to explore, to imagine, and to just be. For parents, it's a rare chance to create memories that shape childhoods and strengthen bonds.

Family time: the heart of summer

Whether you're traveling to new places or simply enjoying the comforts of home, summer offers the perfect backdrop for family togetherness:

- Morning walks and late-night stargazing.
- Cooking together, even if it gets messy.
- Laughing at inside jokes around the dinner table.
- Playing catch, board games, or just being silly.
- Storytime in a tent, even if it's in the living room.

These are the moments that build connection. They don't require a big budget or elaborate plans — just time, attention and love.

A season to remember

What makes summer special isn't just the activities — it's the togetherness. It's about:

- Creating family traditions — like Friday night movies or Sunday park picnics.
- Letting kids be kids — barefoot, curious and full of wonder.
- Making space for joy — spontaneous dance parties, messy crafts, or a second scoop of ice cream.

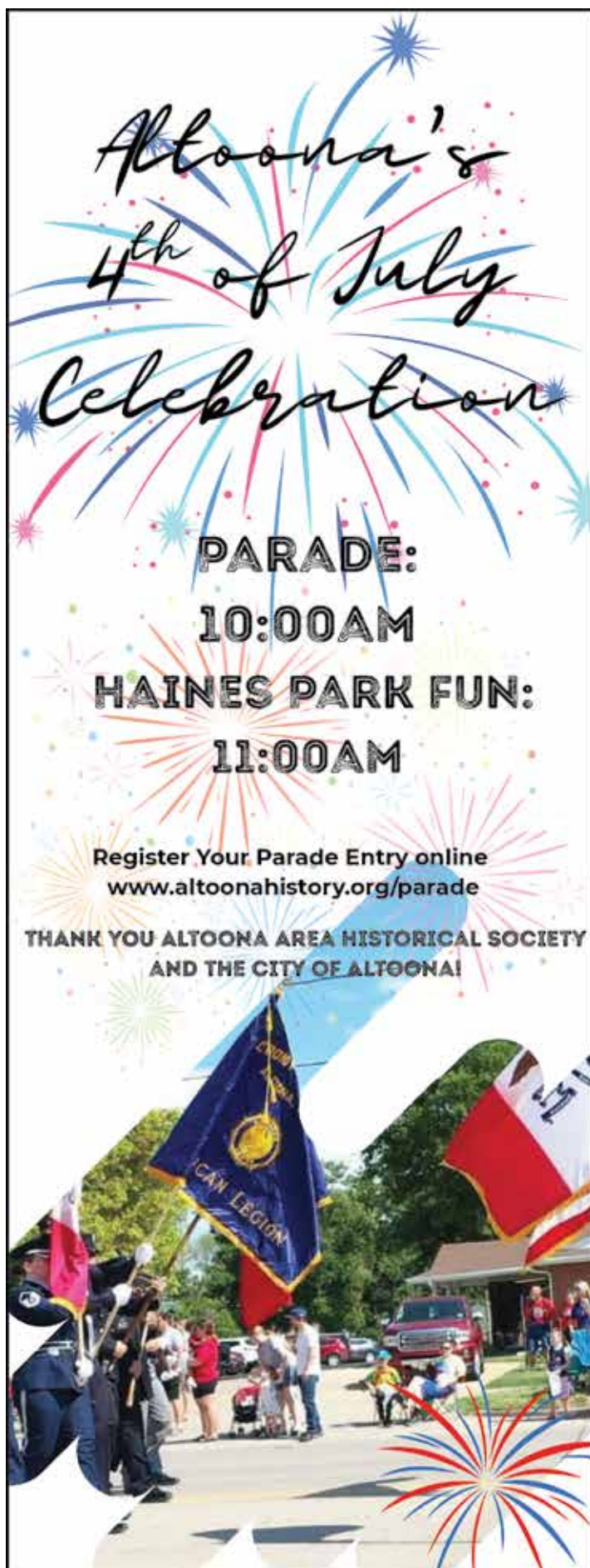
Cherish the season

As the days stretch long and the pace slows, summer reminds us to:

- Be present.
- Make memories.
- Treasure time with the people who matter most.

Because in the end, the true meaning of summer isn't just about sunshine — it's about connection, belonging, and the memories we carry into every season that follows. ■

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



OUT & ABOUT



Joe Carroll and Karri Stratton at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce's monthly networking event, Perk Before Work, hosted by Pennie Carroll & Associates on June 3.



Lori Slings and Joe Morrow at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce's monthly networking event, Perk Before Work, hosted by Pennie Carroll & Associates on June 3.



Rick Kroegeer and Kyle Lee at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce's monthly networking event, Perk Before Work, hosted by Pennie Carroll & Associates on June 3.



The Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Classic 55+ Community Altoona (formerly Vintage Cooperative) on June 5.



Pauline Carrington, Anna Rogers and Bonnie Mullen at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Classic 55+ Community Altoona on June 5.



Tiffany Bickel, Colette Ford and Taylor Hagedorn at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Classic 55+ Community Altoona on June 5.



Carolyn Peterson, Bonnie Mullen, Penny Shenk and Gary Henn at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Classic 55+ Community Altoona on June 5.



Sharon and Jerry Sellers and Tasha Tucker at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Classic 55+ Community Altoona on June 5.



J.D. Snapp, Lori Slings and Roberta Blakeman at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Classic 55+ Community Altoona on June 5.

OUT & ABOUT



The Altoona Chamber of Commerce held a dual ribbon cutting ceremony for Transformed Chiropractic and Garrett Birkett of American Family Insurance at 1003 Eighth St. S.W. on May 30.



Kaitlin and Duke Egli at the Altoona Chamber of Commerce dual ribbon cutting ceremony for Transformed Chiropractic and Garrett Birkett of American Family Insurance on May 30.



Garrett Birkett, Erika Birkett and Kyle Lee at the Altoona Chamber of Commerce dual ribbon cutting ceremony for Transformed Chiropractic and Garrett Birkett of American Family Insurance on May 30.



Mitch Kloss, Duke Egli, Garrett Birkett and Jordan Graves at the Altoona Chamber of Commerce dual ribbon cutting ceremony for Transformed Chiropractic and Garrett Birkett of American Family Insurance on May 30.



Stephanie, Steve and Savannah Olsen at the Altoona Chamber of Commerce dual ribbon cutting ceremony for Transformed Chiropractic and Garrett Birkett of American Family Insurance on May 30.



Dan Douglas at the Altoona Chamber's Regional After-Hours event on May 21.



Elizabeth Ellrich and Chad Quick at the Altoona Chamber's Regional After-Hours event on May 21.



Kennedy Wilson, Matthew Goodman, Melissa Horton and Riley Duer at the Altoona Chamber's Regional After-Hours event on May 21.



Haley Busick and Tammy Jones Christensen at the Altoona Chamber's Regional After-Hours event on May 21.



Linda Lawson, Christine Clark and Kim Kruse at the Altoona Chamber's Regional After-Hours event on May 21.



Tiffany Bickel, Liv Wendt and Garrett Birkett at the Altoona Chamber's Regional After-Hours event on May 21.

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- ❧ Garages
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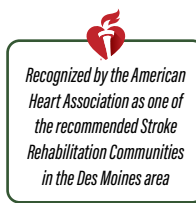
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