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WELCOME

LAWN striping

I vividly remember the pride that Jolene and I had in owning our first home. That was more than 30 years ago, but, in many ways, it still feels like yesterday.

One of the most satisfying aspects of home ownership, at least for us, was having a yard to care for. We couldn't wait to mow our own lawn, do our own landscaping, plant our own trees, etc. It was a matter of pride, and we enjoyed it. It was also a time before becoming parents when we had more hours and more energy to devote to such things. What we didn't have back then were two dimes to rub together, and that's why we begged and borrowed from family members for used mowers and used trimmers and all the other stuff necessary to take care of a lawn.

I remember when I decided I should apply fertilizer to our lawn. This was new to me, as my frugal parents never spent their hard-earned money on such frivolous things. Mom simply had my siblings and me pull weeds by hand. But, as a first-time homeowner, I wanted my lawn to look nice. So, I bought the fertilizer and the spreader and I went to work, making paths throughout my yard like the instructions said to do. What I didn't do was have the dial set to the right number for my fertilizer spreader, and I burned my entire yard with stripes. This was obviously not what I had hoped for, but it did provide fodder for some good-natured ribbing from my neighbors during the years that followed. I gladly gave that fertilizer spreader to my sister-in-law, and I hired a company to do the fertilization from that point forward. And, in time, my lawn took shape — just in time to sell the property and start all over again at our new home.

Today, I still enjoy taking care of my yard — mowing, trimming, gardening, mulching, landscaping, tree trimming — and I am even fertilizing again. But, as I have aged, these tasks became overwhelming, especially when doubled. A few years ago, Jolene and I bought a home on a nearby lake, which meant we now had two properties to care for. It didn't take long before we realized the benefits in owning a townhome and having those yard tasks handled by someone else. I continue to get my fill of yard maintenance enjoyment at our lake home, but I do smile when watching the pros take care of our townhome property. And, thankfully, neither place has lawn stripes burned into the yards.

Thanks for reading. ■

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Dream YARDS

Residents share how they make
the best of their outdoor spaces.

By Joe Baumgarten

Give 10 people the blank slate of a spacious yard, and you are likely to see those yards evolve into 10 different visions. Some will be a fenced-in oasis for dogs and kids to run, roll and play. Others will have pools and fire pits for summer fun. A few may even feature makeshift ballfields, sledding hills, playgrounds, ponds. And most all will provide a scenic setting for enjoying sunrises and sunsets. Whatever the vision, area residents share how their outdoor spaces have become their dream yards.

One of Julie Stork's favorite features in her yard is the "totem pole" her grandchildren painted.

FEATURE

A lawn overhaul

In just two years, Tina and Jeremy Feldmann have transformed their yard from the neighborhood eye sore into the envy of the association. This was no small feat given their lot size is over an acre and was in terrible condition when they moved in, especially the large backyard.

"There were several small fruit trees, a random scattering of arborvitaes, and a line of bushes up closer to the house," Tina says.

"It was bad. We tore out 14 trees," Jeremy says. "There were weeds growing over 6-feet high."

The property was originally owned by the developer of the neighborhood, Jeremy explains. Most of the area in the back was supposed to be a water retention pond, but the developer didn't want that in his backyard, so he moved it further south and claimed more area as his property.

"Since his backyard was so big, he only put sod down on the top half up by the house. He left the bottom half to go wild," Jeremy says.

"Even the patio was terrible," Jeremy says. "I ripped it all out."



Jeremy and Tina Feldmann's large lot needed a lot of work when they moved in. Now it is a beautiful expanse.

He replaced it with Rosetta Stone, a special type of concrete poured into various rubber molds to create a limestone quarry effect.

With all the trees and bushes removed, the next step was to clear out the over-grown grasses and weeds that had overtaken the back half of the property that abuts the community path.

When the monster weeds were cleared away, Jeremy covered everything with 700 cubic yards of good topsoil and dispersed it across the yard.

"We got a great tip from a farmer that adding gypsum would soften the soil, making it easier for the grass to take root," Jeremy says. "Then we applied fertilizer and lime. Once everything was ready, we seeded it three different times with Kentucky Bluegrass."

With a yard that size, they knew the only way to water it would be to install a large irrigation system.

"It's a pretty hefty water bill," Tina says, adding that it is now shut off due to the ban on

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watering lawns.

Luckily, Mother Nature has stepped up with some well-timed and much-appreciated showers.

When the grass goes to seed in the spring, Jeremy mows it as high as his mower will go in order to spread that seed back into the lawn. This helps the lawn become more lush each season.

“It will reseed itself,” he says.

Having completed all of their improvements to the yard, the grand finale was to surround the entire back property with a black iron fence.

“It’s keeps our dogs in,” Tina says. “They love to get out and run. If there is another dog walking on the path, they are sure to go over and say hello.”

On cooler days, the Feldmanns enjoy sitting on the upper patio, but since it is on the west side of the house, they avoid the mid-day heat.

“It is beautiful to come out here in the mornings,” Tina says.

On the lower patio, accessed via the walk-out basement, they added some comfortable chairs, umbrellas and tables for when they want to entertain. In the cooler months, they enjoy the hot tub.

As fantastic as everything looks today, the Feldmanns are not content.

“Our next project is to put in a pool with a lazy river,” Jeremy says. “We already have the plans drawn up.”

“We still have a lot of work to do,” Tina says. “It’s a work in progress.”

Controlled chaos

There is easily enough going on in Julie and Tom Stork’s backyard to keep a large team of landscapers busy. Surrounding the large open area of lusciously green grass, they have multiple gardens with numerous plants, flowers and vegetables. They have two varieties of peas, tomatoes, asparagus, lettuce, Swish chard, zucchini, strawberries, rhubarb and peppers. They have cone flowers, poppies, larkspur, hollyhocks, hibiscus and coreopsis.

“This plant here is an experiment,” Julie says, pointing to one. “I’m not quite sure what it is. I thought I had planted some flower seeds, but it looks more like a weed. I’m waiting for it to bloom before I decide to keep it or pull it.”

The entire area has the vibe of controlled chaos. Yes, they carefully landscape, mulch, pull weeds and plant various items, but they have also let Mother Nature play her hand as well.

“It all started 30 years ago,” Julie says. “The



Julie and Tom Stork’s home is surrounded by flower beds and a luscious lawn.

kids were grown and flown, and we had more time on our hands. Tom decided he needed a hobby, and he started growing roses,” Julie says.

Tom joined the local Rose Society and eventually began showing his roses at the Iowa State Fair. Just as they were ready to bloom, however, the deer would swing by for a midnight snack and, “poof,” no more blue ribbons.

Today they have strung fishing line between two poles above the roses. The deer can’t see it and it hits their faces as they bend down to nibble. It is just enough to scare them off to find a less “dangerous” snack.

“When we built the house in 1988, we envisioned the backyard would be mostly trees,” Tom says. “As time went on, some trees died, some grew too large, and we had to cut them down. We decided that we preferred fewer trees and more open space.”

“We had to cut down a big blue spruce tree over in the side yard,” Julie says.

Rather than cutting it to the ground, they left about ten feet of the trunk still in the ground.

“The grandchildren turned it into a Totem Pole, and each one chose their spirit animal to paint onto the tree.”

As the years went by, their garden grew and grew, sometimes where they wanted it to grow and sometimes where nature wanted it to grow.

“There is only so much you can do to control nature,” Julie says.

Julie and Tom have enough variety of plants that something is always happening from early spring until the first frost ends the season. Some plants flower early, giving a wonderful splash of color and life after a long, dreary winter. When

those die out, something else in another part of the yard is ready to grab your attention.

The couple’s children and grandchildren were recently back for a visit.

“They played in the backyard a lot, throwing Frisbees, kicking a ball, and playing on the swing set. They even helped me pick some peas for dinner one night,” Julie says.

Several years ago, the Storks extended the house with a room on the back. It has several large windows that allow them to enjoy the yard even from inside the house.

“When you wake up in the morning in the wintertime, you can come into that room and feel you are outside,” Julie says.

“We get out just about every day and do something in the yard,” Tom says.

Sometimes they work, and sometimes they just sit and enjoy the beauty of their backyard Eden.

Health, wildlife and pollinators

“Let me tell you ‘bout the birds and the bees and the flowers and trees.” — Jewel Akens

There are two types of yard people: those who attempt to bend Mother Nature to their desire and those who consider her a loving partner to be worked with, not against. Valerie Just is most certainly in the latter camp. What others see as an undesirable weed to be eradicated with chemicals, Valerie sees as an essential plant for the environment and helps it to thrive in her yard.

“My backyard is full of clover right now,” she says. “We don’t mow it on purpose to let it flower,” adding, there is a definite method to their “madness.”

John and Valerie have multiple hives of

FEATURE

honeybees in the back of their yard.

"The bees depend on the clover in the early spring to start their collection of pollen," Valerie says.

"We don't put any chemicals on our lawn, ever," Valerie says. "It's not only bad for the bees, it is bad for the environment as well. Think of all the nitrates that are going into our river system now."

Valerie's concern is well-timed. In mid-June, the Central Iowa Water Works company issued its first-ever lawn watering ban because of the unprecedented levels of nitrates in Iowa rivers. The company emphasizes the water is safe to drink, but it was having a hard time keeping the levels below Federal requirements with the increased demand from summer lawn watering.

Valerie also planted other flowers around the edges of the yard that will bloom later in the summer and fall. These feed the bees and attract the Monarch butterflies as they migrate south.

The increase of insects in the yard also attracts many birds. A Cardinal sings loudly, perched on a feeder Valerie has placed in the yard.

"We get deer, rabbits, fox and opossum. We



Valerie Just's lawn is a field of clover, which benefit the bees she has.

even had a family of raccoons show up the other night."

While some flowers are for the insects, Valerie also uses her yard to grow flowers for herself.

"I have a cutting garden with lisianthus and zenias. I love to make bouquets. I grow basal and dill for some green foliage around the flowers."

The birds and bees are not the only creatures drawn to Valerie's backyard.

"I had my grandkids here last week," she says. "We set up bases and played Wiffle ball."

She also has a large stone patio surrounding a fire pit. A pergola covers it for a little extra shade and for visual interest.

"We use it to entertain guests," she says.

"I want to use my property to its fullest purpose," she says. "I want to use it for our health, for the pollinators, and for the native wildlife. I try to use it as best as I can." ■



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HOSPICE care may be a gift to your family

For Linda's family, summer had always meant joy — a season of togetherness, with loved ones traveling from near and far to reconnect and celebrate.

But last year was different. Linda's health was steadily declining due to several chronic conditions, and although she still cherished the idea of seeing her family, she and her husband, Tom, weren't sure how they could fully take part in the usual reunion activities.

Support from an in-home hospice team helped shift the focus from what they couldn't do to what was still possible — allowing the family to create lasting memories during a meaningful summer.

"Hospice began caring for Linda just after Easter," Tom recalls. "They gave her the support she needed to enjoy a few very good months, and she was able to take part in our June family gathering. It might sound unusual, but that



summer felt full of life."

When you're exploring hospice care for someone you love, it may feel difficult — even paradoxical — to associate it with the idea of living. But that's exactly what hospice is meant to support: living well, with dignity and comfort, even as health declines.

Hospice care isn't one-size-fits-all. It can be provided at home, in a dedicated hospice facility, or in a blended care model — and the right choice depends on your family's unique situation and needs.

Whatever form of care you consider, one of the most important questions to ask is: "How can this help my loved one live fully during this stage of life?"

Many people are surprised to learn that hospice can begin earlier than they think — as soon as a person has received a diagnosis of a life-limiting condition. Early access to hospice can improve comfort and quality of life for weeks or even months, providing space and peace to focus on what matters most.

If you're navigating a loved one's illness this summer, consider how you want to spend that time together. Hospice providers can often deliver care in a person's home, helping preserve familiar surroundings while supporting both the individual and their family.

While reaching out to a hospice team can feel daunting, having compassionate, expert care in place can ease stress and allow for more meaningful moments — especially during treasured family traditions.

"Once we had hospice involved and a plan in place, it lifted a huge burden," Tom says. "We could concentrate on celebrating the season with Linda, knowing she was comfortable and cared for. We'll never forget that summer — it was a gift." ■

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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URBANDALE COUNCIL RECAP



July 1, 2025 – Council Meeting

The Urbandale City Council convened on July 1, and the meeting began with Mayor Andrew Eggen officially proclaiming July 2025 as Parks and Recreation Month, underscoring Urbandale's ongoing commitment to healthy lifestyles, environmental protection, and community well-being.

During the public hearing portion, the Council reviewed and approved the first reading of proposed amendments to zoning regulations concerning Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). The Council discussed changes aimed at providing more housing options and aligning

Mayor Andrew Eggen proclaiming July 2025 as Parks and Recreation Month

with the Comprehensive Plan's goals for diversified housing and sustainable growth.

Two agreements enhancing public safety and community services were also approved. First, a renewed agreement with the Urbandale Community School District ensures the continuation and improvement of the School Resource Officer program. Second, a separate agreement with Windsor Heights authorizes Urbandale's Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) to provide specialized mental health response services in Windsor Heights.

The next regular City Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 15, 2025, at 6:00 PM. Residents are encouraged to attend in person or watch online via the city's YouTube channel.

June 17, 2025 – Council Meeting

At the Tuesday, June 17 City Council meeting, the Mayor issued a proclamation recognizing Juneteenth, aligning with the City's mission to foster a safe and inclusive Urbandale through the delivery of outstanding municipal services, fiscal responsibility, and a dedicated focus on community members.

The Council approved moving forward with the annexation of approximately 100 acres currently owned by the Des Moines Christian School Association. Located half a mile east of 142nd Street on the south side of Meredith Drive, this property was previously part of the City of Grimes. Grimes agreed to the property's severance earlier this year, facilitating its annexation into Urbandale. The annexation now awaits final approval by the State of Iowa's City Development Board, followed by a 30-day appeal period.

The Council approved the Urbandale Downtown Master Plan, marking a significant step forward in revitalizing and reshaping the city's historic center. Building on the Comprehensive Plan, the Downtown Master Plan sets out a clear vision for the area along Douglas Avenue from 72nd Street eastward to the city limits, enhancing its character, accessibility, and economic vitality. After extensive community involvement (including stakeholder meetings, public hearings, and open houses) the plan outlines key initiatives such as converting Douglas Avenue into a three-lane road, encouraging targeted redevelopment, and establishing a distinct downtown identity. It also prioritizes diversified housing options, improved parking management, and innovative stormwater solutions.

This is a custom publication from the City of Urbandale. The Council Recap is not the official minutes of the Council meeting, it's an easy-to-read and easy-to-understand digest of the Council Meetings specifically designed for residents.

You can watch all the City Council meetings on YouTube and download Council agendas on the City's website.

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FAITH By Steve Smith

GOOD enough?



As a 7-year-old, I went to baseball tryouts to see if I was good enough to make the team. I waited anxiously for the next few days until I received the welcome news — I made the team.

Almost every religious system teaches its followers that being good enough is the criteria for acceptance by the deity or deities they worship. Unfortunately, many professing Christians or those considering Christianity erroneously operate on this same premise.

Most people think God “grades” people on the curve, believing that, if we just do more good than bad, then He will accept us.

God’s Word declares the opposite — nobody is good enough to achieve God’s standard of moral perfection. “There is none righteous, not even one...there is none who seeks for God...there is none who does good...” (Romans 3:10-11). Our very best efforts still leave us morally deficient and deserving of His just wrath (Romans 6:23).

If we can’t make it onto God’s team by being good enough in our own efforts, then how is it possible to be right with God? The marvel of Christianity is that deliverance from God’s just punishment and acceptance into His family comes not by our good works, but God’s good grace.

“For by grace you have been saved (from God’s punishment and sin’s power) through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God, not as a result of works...” (Ephesians 2:8-9) God’s forgiveness and acceptance of wicked people is a free, undeserved gift that is received by faith and not earned by good deeds.

We are not saved because we are good, but because Jesus Christ, God’s morally perfect Son, graciously chose to suffer the punishment we deserved because of our inherent wickedness by dying on the cross in our place (Romans 5:8). If we accept by faith His sacrifice as the penalty we deserve and His resurrection as the proof that He conquered sin and death for us, then we are welcomed into God’s family (John 1:12).

We cannot be saved because of the work we do for God, but because we accept Christ’s work done for us. “But He (Jesus) was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities...by His scourging we are healed” (Isaiah 53:5).

The only proper response to God’s question, “Why should I let you into my eternal presence?” is, “You shouldn’t.” But if we believe that Jesus Christ died and rose again for us, we can claim God’s promise that we’ve been granted eternal life (1 John 5:13).

We aren’t good enough. But God’s grace is enough, and, by His grace, believers are on His team. ■

Information provided by Steve Smith, Creekside Church,
2743 82nd Place, Urbandale, 515-279-3919.

A MULTI-FACETED approach

Sustainability includes a variety of methods.

Despite growing concerns about climate change, proposed Congressional legislation seeks to roll back climate provisions, while some states are eliminating the term “climate change” from science textbooks. Those actions are compelling communities like Urbandale to take the lead in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

To gain a better understanding of the problem, Urbandale participated in a 2019 greenhouse gas inventory, revealing that 68% of Urbandale’s emissions originated from transportation and residential sources.

Following that study, Urbandale partnered with the Polk Grow Solar project in 2023 to offer discounted solar panels to residents. The city also installed a 450-panel solar array on its Parks and Public Works Maintenance Facility. John Konior, director of risk management and support services, states that the panels reduced carbon dioxide emissions by 234 tons in their first year of operation. The city is currently considering installing solar panels on an additional six public buildings.

To reduce gasoline consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, the city has purchased several hybrid and electric vehicles (EVs), including five hybrid police patrol cars and six unmarked vehicles. Captain Dan Stein maintains the city’s fleet of police vehicles.

He says utilizing EVs as patrol cars may someday be possible, but only if the recharging infrastructure is improved and the time it takes to recharge vehicles is reduced. “Our patrol cars are typically in service for 12 hours straight, sometimes up to 24 hours.”

In 2024, Urbandale collaborated with Iowa State University to develop a comprehensive sustainability plan, resulting in the creation of the Sustainable Urbandale Action Plan. (The plan and other resources can be found at the city’s new sustainability website <https://green.urbandale.org>.) As recommended, the city has budgeted to improve staff support for sustainability measures and is implementing a “Complete Streets” plan to ensure safer access for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists of all ages and abilities.

Another means of making Urbandale sustainable requires constant maintenance of its parks and public areas. Following significant



Urbandale Parks and Public Works Maintenance Facility includes a 450-panel solar array.



A new bicycle lane designation has been created on 98th Street and Aurora Avenue.

tree loss during the 2023 storms, Urbandale replanted hundreds of trees with the help of volunteers and offered native species trees at discounted prices to residents this spring. According to Scott Hock, assistant director of parks and recreation, efforts to combat invasive species include recruiting a Drake University professor to evaluate the current health of several Urbandale parks and provide recommendations on how to remove invasive plant species. That study will conclude in 2026.

Mayor Bob Andeweg maintains that sustainability is an important priority. He says sustainability is attractive to current and potential residents. At the mayor’s annual Condition of the City address, he said, “Sustainability is a smart investment strategy.



An Urbandale Police patrol car has a hybrid vehicle designation on it.

And it’s already paying off. Our commitment to sustainability ensures Urbandale residents a healthy, vibrant place to come.” ■

Wayne Bruns is an Urbandale resident and a volunteer with Sustainable Urbandale, www.sustainableurbandale.org.

WHAT IS a revocable trust?

A revocable trust is a flexible estate-planning tool with many benefits. A trust is a legal entity created by a written legal document. It functions similarly to a last will and testament. It names someone to manage your affairs, provides rules for that asset-management, and sets out how to divide money when you die.

But a trust can do much more than that. Because it is established during your lifetime, you have flexibility and control. Trusts are often used as a means to give money or property to others over time, or for limiting disbursements to beneficiaries.

Trusts aren't for everybody, but they have many advantages.

Choose who is in charge

You will likely name yourself as trustee of your trust. You should also name a successor trustee to carry on this role. Upon your death or disability, the successor trustee steps in to fulfill responsibilities as outlined in the trust document. The trust allows you to choose who you want to manage your financial affairs.

Continuity in asset management

A trust is a good way to ensure that your assets will be managed the way



you want them to, even if you aren't able to participate in the decisions. If you become incapacitated, the trust provides a blueprint for paying income and assets to you and your family. The assets in a trust, with clear guidelines on their use by the trustee, guarantees that your loved ones will still have those benefits.

Assets are not subject to probate

A properly drafted trust will keep the assets in the trust out of probate. That means they are not administered with court oversight. Staying out of probate court can save a lot of money in costs and fees. This is a huge advantage for many people and often one of the main reasons for creating a revocable trust.

Privacy

If your estate has to be administered through the probate court, your assets will be public record. This can be problematic for people who value their privacy. When your assets are in a trust, then only you, your beneficiaries, and the trustee have access to them.

When you are considering which estate planning tools are right for you, contact an attorney who specializes in estate planning — an attorney you can trust. ■

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

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July is a month that stirs deep emotions for many of us. As we celebrate Independence Day, we reflect on the freedoms we enjoy, and, for those in your late 50s, 60s or early 70s, one of the most important freedoms we seek is financial independence.

Whether you're approaching retirement, newly retired, or well into your golden years, July is the perfect time to take stock of where you are financially and ensure that your retirement years are as rewarding and worry-free as possible.

The mid-year financial review: We're halfway through 2025 — a great time to revisit your financial goals. Ask yourself: Are my retirement income sources (Social Security, pensions, IRAs, investments) supporting my lifestyle? Do I need to adjust my withdrawal strategy? Have I reviewed my required minimum distributions (RMDs) and what its requirements do to my Medicare premiums in the future? Have I "protected" the plan adequately with proper health, long-term care, or life insurance? A mid-year financial review can reveal small tweaks that lead to greater peace of mind.

Rethink retirement spending: The early years of retirement can sometimes lead to overspending, especially as we enjoy more free time. If you've recently retired or adjusted your work schedule, it's important to monitor your spending to avoid dipping too heavily into your savings early on. Now is a good time to revisit your budget. Are there consistent expenses you no longer need — like commuting costs or work-related clothing? Are you planning for larger expenses like travel or home improvements later this year? A clear plan ensures you stay in control.

Tax planning — retirement style: For many retirees, taxes don't end with work. In fact, tax planning becomes more important than ever. If you're older than 59½ and withdrawing from IRAs or 401(k)s, be strategic to avoid pushing yourself into a higher tax bracket. Additionally, those age 73 and older must take RMDs. Make sure you understand the rules, and the timing, so you don't face avoidable penalties. July is a great month to meet with your financial advisor to ensure your plan remains tax efficient.

Reevaluate risk: Your investment portfolio should reflect your current lifestyle, risk tolerance and time horizon. July offers a great opportunity to ensure your mix of stocks, bonds and other assets is appropriate for your stage of life. If the recent market volatility has made you uneasy, it may be time to reallocate your investments for more stability — without sacrificing your long-term goals.

Celebrate your progress: Too often, we dwell only on what's left to do, instead of appreciating how far we've come. If you've reached a point of financial stability, paid off a mortgage, or comfortably entered retirement, pause and celebrate. These are major accomplishments.

The freedom you've earned: As we raise our flags and enjoy summer traditions, let us also honor the financial freedom we've worked so hard to achieve. Whether you are still planning or fully retired, July is a great reminder to live intentionally — and financially prepared.

Remember: Your financial independence is something worth celebrating every day. ■



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.

This July,

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MEET Todd Pettit

Educating for the long haul

Todd Pettit has been an educator for 33 years in the Urbandale School District. Because he enjoyed working with children, he sought teaching positions immediately after graduating from Grand View University in Des Moines.

"I was able to do a long-term substitute position," he recalls. "I was offered a position right after that, and I have never left."

Pettit has been a fifth-grade teacher his entire career in education, though the location has changed.

"I taught at Jensen Elementary School for 30 years," he shares. "When Jensen was closed, I moved into the new Olmsted Elementary building. I like how independent fifth graders are and how fun they are to work with. I try hard to build a family atmosphere in my classroom and to build strong relationships with my students."

Pettit has a class motto, "Pettit's Pride," symbolic of a lion pride, where he and the students try to help and look out for each other. At the end of each school year, he has his students write a letter to their senior self, predicting what their future life will be like.

"Often they forget about their letter to themselves, and then, seven years later, they get surprised with a letter in their own handwriting in their mailbox," he shares. "They seem to love seeing what they predicted their life would be like."

Pettit shares that the most challenging aspect of his job has been to keep up with changes, especially with respect to technology and changing curriculum.

"Luckily, I have a great team that helps keep me updated with all the new tech and best practices with new curriculum," he says.

Academics is only part of how Pettit educates students. He is also a driver's education instructor and has maintained the role for 25 years.

"One of my friends started a company and needed some instructors," he relates. "I agreed and took the class. I do the nights, weekends and all summer long. I tell my students when they are in fifth grade to come and drive with me in four or five years when they get ready to take driver's ed. When they do, it's cool to see how they have grown."

Pettit is also a reserve lieutenant police officer in Urbandale when he isn't busy in a classroom or driver's education vehicle. In this role, he also seeks to educate and enrich his students' lives when he sees them out and about.

"When I work patrol for the Fourth of July, some of my former students will see me in uniform and come say hi," he shares. "I love the opportunity to help kids not be afraid to talk to and engage with police officers."

When asked why others should consider becoming a teacher, Pettit says that teaching is a wonderful opportunity to share knowledge with students and to teach the next generation to think for themselves and make smart decisions. ■



Todd Pettit enjoys his interactions with students through his roles as a fifth-grade teacher, driver's education instructor and reserve police officer.

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Make your voice be heard and cast your votes in the 2025 Northwest Metro Residents' Choice Poll. This contest is being hosted by Iowa Living magazines, and the results will publish in our Grimes/Dallas Center, Johnston, Clive and Urbandale October editions. You can vote in one or every category, or anywhere in between.

HURRY! POLL CLOSES AUG. 29, 2025.

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

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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
- Catering Company
- Server/Bartender

AUTOMOTIVE

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

COMMUNITY

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

SHOPPING

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

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
- Golf Course

HEALTH/BEAUTY

- Hair Salon
- Health Clinic
- Dental Office
- Orthodontist Office
- Mental Health Services
- Chiropractic Office
- Vision Care
- Health Club or Gym
- Pharmacy

HEALTH/BEAUTY

- Cosmetic Services
- Physical Therapy
- Dance Studio
- Gymnastics Studio
- Tumbling Studio

OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Financial Planner
- Law Firm
- Accounting Firm
- Veterinarian
- Dog Groomer
- Pet Care
- Lawn Care Business
- Landscaping Company
- Heating and Cooling Business
- Electrical Business
- Plumbing Company
- Senior Living Establishment
- Insurance Company
- Realtor
- Bank/Credit Union
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NEWS BRIEF

BOGGESS named executive director of UCAN

The Urbandale Community Action Network (UCAN) announced Eileen Boggess has accepted the position of UCAN's executive director. Boggess, a longtime resident of Urbandale, was formerly the director of the Urbandale Food Pantry and is currently working for the Des Moines Women's Club.

In anticipation of her new role with UCAN, Boggess says she is excited "to get back to helping Urbandale!" Her knowledge of Urbandale and the needs of its residents will enable UCAN to implement its strategic plans, strengthen existing programs, and establish new programs to continue to improve the quality of life in Urbandale.

UCAN's mission is to provide essential support and resources to Urbandale residents, fostering a stronger, more resilient community. ■

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560,000 cans and bottles

Knights of Columbus raises money for InnerVisions.

While the deposit on cans and bottles is meant to encourage recycling of those items, the truth is that many people don't want to bother with the hassle of delivering them to a can redemption center. But many are still willing to save them up to donate to a local fundraising can drive.



Seth Rowland of the St. Pius X Knights of Columbus Society saw an opportunity. Starting in April 2016, Seth has organized the men of his group to set up shop in the parking lot of St. Pius in Urbandale. For ten months of the year, you can find them there from 9-11 a.m. on the second Saturday of the month.

"It's a great activity with benefits aplenty," Seth says. "Sorting and redeeming cans and bottles has become a chore for people. We make it easy for them to drop off their collection at St. Pius. No need to sort or count; they don't even need to get out of their vehicle."

Seth helped with a similar event conducted by the Knights of Columbus in Iowa City. When he moved to Urbandale, he thought it would be a good fit here as well.

"It's a fun activity that brings the Knights together each month. It gives us a feeling of accomplishment seeing the enormous pile of boxes of bottles and bags of cans. We usually have 10 Knights helping, so it makes light work for everyone."

Where does the money go after they cash in all those cans and bottles? The St. Pius Knights donate all proceeds to InnerVisions Healthcare, a local non-profit organization in Des Moines. According to the InnerVisions Healthcare website, "InnerVisions serves women and men with unplanned pregnancies and STDs who find themselves in vulnerable situations. Our free medical clinic helps these patients make life-affirming decisions."

"Over the past 9 years, we have raised \$28,000," Seth says. "That's 560,000 cans and bottles. A local can redemption center brings a truck to pick them up; we often fill it to the brim."

Shred Day

Not to be outdone by the St. Pius Knights, the men of the Holy Name Society were on the other side of the parking lot, processing their own line of cars. Every year, just after tax time, St. Pius hires a local shredding company. Anyone is welcome to bring their paper to be shredded. The shredding machine is a large truck, about the size of a garbage truck. First it shreds one way, then shreds it again the other way, creating small scraps of paper about the size of paper clip. The company recycles the shredded paper.

Mike Schroeder, president of the Holy Name Society, organizes his team to lug the papers from the trunks to the shredder. They accept freewill donations. This year, the team raised \$960. ■



Ryan Mehalovich of Edward Jones presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Seth Rowland and Mike Schroeder.

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LIBRARY

URBANDALE Public Library events



Urbandale Public Library

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www.urbandalelibrary.org

Monday – Thursday: 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Friday – Saturday: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Sunday: noon to 6 p.m.

Spock's Reptile Sanctuary

We will have three sessions on Saturday, July 19, for your chance to touch or hold a reptile: 10 a.m., 10:45 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Spock's Sanctuary rescues, rehabilitates and rehomes reptile, amphibian and invertebrate animals. Register and complete the waiver to attend.

Writing Workshop

In this engaging and actionable workshop on Tuesday, July 29, at 6 p.m., Brooke Van Sickle will guide you through the essential storytelling techniques that make a children's book unforgettable. Brooke is the owner and founder of the Journey to Kidlit, the online educational platform that teaches thousands of aspiring children's book writers from more than 35 countries around the world about how to write and publish a children's book based on her own award-winning writing journey.

Last Day of Summer Reading

Thursday, July 31, is the last day to log your reading for the Summer Reading Program. Adults must redeem their tickets on Beanstack by July 31. A short grace period will be given to youth Beanstack users as well as anyone who kept track on a paper log. Grand prize entry forms must be completed by Sunday, Aug. 10.

The prizes for youth (ages 0-17) include a \$100 gift card to Barnes & Noble, Get Air, Target, Walmart, and a one-year membership to Blank Park Zoo.

Adults can enter to win a \$100 gift card from Barnes & Noble, Half-Price Books, Zellaphant Books, Climb Iowa, or a 1-year membership to the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden.

National Night Out Book Sale

Be sure to stop by National Night Out on Tuesday, Aug. 5, from 5-7:30 p.m. to see a preview of the book sale and check out our craft table for youth. The book sale will be open during regular library hours in the ICN Room from Wednesday, Aug. 6, to Sunday, Aug. 11. ■

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

Check for cancellations

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

Upcoming in Urbandale Living magazine:

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.

Home Improvement: Our annual Home Improvement issue in which we share residents' stories about their remodeling projects is coming up. Please share your stories about the work you have done on your home and how it has changed your use of the space and enjoyment of your home. Email tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com with your stories.

Creatures Down Un-Dah Camp

Aug. 5-8, 9 a.m. to noon
3753 86th St., Urbandale

Ages 5-12 can sign up for a four-day Aussie Art Camp. Kids will complete themed paintings each day, plus other special themed crafts and projects. Snacks and juice provided, as well as all supplies and instruction. Painting with a Twist staff lead the camp. Registration deadline is July 28 at <http://urbandale.org/aussie-art>.



5-cent redeemable cans and bottles drop off

Second Saturday through December, 9-11 a.m.
St. Pius X Parish Center,
3663 66th St., Urbandale

Donations of 5-cent redeemable cans and bottles can be dropped off. The Knights of Columbus donate proceeds to InnerVisions Healthcare.

Urbandale Summer Concert Series

Various dates

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, July 20, 1:30-2:15 p.m.:
Public Piano Sunday Series
- Sunday, July 27, 1:30-2:15 p.m.:
Public Piano Sunday Series
- Tuesday, July 29, 6:30-8 p.m.:
June Bugs DSM
- Sunday, Aug. 3, 1:30-2:15 p.m.:
Public Piano Sunday Series
- Sunday, Aug. 10, 1:30-2:15 p.m.:
Public Piano Sunday Series
- Sunday, Aug. 17, 1:30-2:15 p.m.:
Public Piano Sunday Series
- Sunday, Aug. 24, 1:30-2:15 p.m.:
Public Piano Sunday Series
- Tuesday, Aug. 26, 6:30-8 p.m.:
River City Opry

Senior Watercolor: Corgi

Monday, Aug. 4, 1-2 p.m.

Urbandale Senior Recreation Center, 7305 Aurora Ave.,
Urbandale

Ages 55 and older are invited to join Mandi from Rainbow Lizard Design and jump into watercolor with this adorable art project. In this one-hour class, you will learn a little about drawing and watercolor to create your very own cute corgi portrait. This class is beginner friendly, and supplies are provided. Register by July 28 at <http://urbandale.org/watercolorcorgi>.

Beats and Eats

July 17 and 24

Ankeny Market & Pavillion, 715 W. First St., Ankeny

Enjoy this fun summertime event featuring food trucks, live music, activities, yard games, the Uptown train and more. On July 17, enjoy music by Cover That and food trucks Main Street Cafe, Nina's Tacos, Pho All Seasons, Sweet Swirls and Lucky Wife. Activities will include Hock Farms petting zoo, Pink Stew balloon twist, spin art and a parkour obstacle course. Enjoy The Get Down Band on July 24 and food from Loudi's, Flame, Outside Scoop and Lucky Wife. Activities include axe throw inflatable, basketball inflatable, K Brede Art face paint and a parkour obstacle course. Beats & Eats is a free community event produced by the City of Ankeny Parks & Recreation Department and sponsored by Uptown Ankeny. Food trucks and entertainment are subject to change. For more information, visit www.ankenyiowa.gov/eats.



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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Check for cancellations

Music in the Garden Series

July 24 and 31 and Aug. 7
Greater Des Moines Botanical
Garden, 909 Robert D. Ray Drive,
Des Moines
www.dmbotanicalgarden.com

Enjoy live music in the beautiful setting of the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden. Upcoming concerts are: July 24: The Crowfoot Rakes; July 31: Mango Soul; Aug. 7: Diplomats of Solid Sound. Doors open at 6 p.m. and concerts start at 6:30 p.m.

The Music of John Williams

Various dates and locations

The Greater Des Moines Community Band announces the schedule for its 2025 summer concert series, "The Music of John Williams."

- July 21, 7 p.m. Woodlands Creek, 12675 Woodlands Parkway, Clive
- July 28, 7 p.m. Copper Shores Village, 1500 Edgewater Drive, Pleasant Hill
- Aug. 4, 6:30 p.m. Rieman Music, 6501 Douglas, Urbandale
- Aug. 9, 11 a.m. Iowa State Fair, Knapp Stage

Waukee Arts Festival

July 18-19
Centennial Park,
1255 Warrior Lane, Waukee

Visit 140 vendor booths in the largest Waukee Arts Festival to date. Food and beverage trucks, The Waukee Fine Arts Footrace and numerous live bands are planned. For a full schedule of events, list of artists and festival updates, visit www.waukeeartsfestival.org.

Clive Festival

Friday, July 18, to Saturday, July 19

Mark your calendars for Clive's biggest (and best) community event. Enjoy free live music, Thunder Over Clive Fireworks, bounce houses, activities for kids, food trucks, Kids Art Expo, the Clive Running Festival, Clive Lions Club Pancake Breakfast, Touch a Truck, Cardboard Boat Regatta at Clive Aquatic Center, and more. Check the Clive Festival Facebook page for details.

Earlham concert series

Every Sunday until Aug. 10, 6 p.m.
Earlham City Park, Earlham

The Levitt Amp Earlham Music Series starts with an opening act around 6 p.m. and a headliner around 7:15 p.m. Lots of kids activities and food trucks will be offered as well. The concerts are free and include: July 20: Mae Simpson, Yubu; July 27: Blame Not the Bard, Day's Live Music; Aug. 3: Larry & Joe, Sun Centauri; Aug. 10: Dessa and The 29:11 South African Choir, Nella Thomas.

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.

- July 21-22: Dupont Brass, parks across the metro
- Aug. 13: Storytime Under the Green Umbrella, Cowles Commons
- Aug. 23: Dancing on Cowles Commons

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



National Balloon Classic

July 25 to Aug. 2
Memorial Balloon Field,
1136 150th Ave., Indianola

Beautifully colored hot air balloons dot the skies over Indianola at this annual event. Watch the competition as well as special night shows and enjoy entertainment at the Balloon Field. For more information, visit www.nationalballoonclassic.com.



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/>. ■

Beaverdale Bluegrass Festival

Saturday, July 19, 2:30-10 p.m.
Tower Park, 4900 Hickman Road, Des Moines

Dust off your lawn chairs and mark your calendars, the Beaverdale Bluegrass Festival is back and better than ever. Set against the iconic backdrop of Des Moines' Tower Park, this free, family-friendly festival has a lineup stacked with bluegrass brilliance, a harmonious mix of local favorites and acclaimed touring acts that promise to have the whole park clapping, dancing and singing along. Headlining this year's festival are The Po' Ramblin' Boys. Additional acts include The Baberhood Bluegrass Band, The Weary Ramblers, Songs from the Road Band, The Black Dirt Ramblers and Central Iowa Music Lab's Bluegrass All Stars, youth talent, kicking things off with an energetic set at 2:30 p.m.

In addition to great music, attendees can enjoy local food trucks, cold beverages and a relaxed neighborhood atmosphere that's pure Beaverdale charm. Admission is free, and all ages are welcome. Bring a blanket, a friend, and your best foot-stomping attitude. For more details, visit www.beaverdalebluegrass.com or follow along on social media for updates.



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WELLNESS

By Annette Smith

CONCUSSIONS: the symptoms no one talks about

When people hear “concussion,” they often picture a sports injury, but the reality is, concussions can result from everyday mishaps: a car accident, a slip on the ice or even hitting your head on a cabinet. While symptoms like headaches, dizziness and nausea are commonly discussed, others often go unnoticed: mental fog, trouble concentrating, neck pain, fatigue or even a general sense of “not feeling right.”



What many do not realize is that these symptoms can linger for weeks — or even months — after the initial injury. Why? Because concussion recovery involves more than just the brain. The neck, the eyes and the vestibular system (the inner ear’s balance mechanism) all play an essential role in how we process movement and information. When one or more of these systems is out of sync, symptoms can persist or worsen with activity, screen time or stress.

Fortunately, a growing body of research supports the use of targeted rehabilitation to help address post-concussion symptoms. Treatment may involve vestibular therapy, visual-motor exercises or gentle movement strategies to restore balance, coordination and focus. If symptoms linger, consulting with a healthcare professional experienced in concussion management can help guide a safer, more complete recovery. ■

Information provided by Annette Smith, Mountain Laurel Physical Therapy, 10888 Hickman Road, Suite 2B, Clive, Iowa, 50325, 515-520-8037, mountainlaurelpt.com.

PLAN AHEAD

By Sasha Mudlaff
and Holly Peterson Miller

THANK YOU, Mom and Dad

Our mother died a few years ago after struggling through the late stages of Alzheimer’s disease. Honoring her during this stressful time was our family’s ultimate goal. And, then again, when she died, we wanted to honor her life in the best way we could. Well, we can tell you firsthand that having her preplanned funeral in place was extremely valuable in helping us achieve our goal. All of the information surrounding her death, visitation, service and burial were organized in a preplanning file at the funeral home. Knowing her wishes, having merchandise selections already made, having the details about what would be in her obituary already written down and having the information for the death certificate already recorded all helped to make the process of funeral arrangements so much easier for our family.



Since that time, our dad has been “tweaking” his own preplan, which is currently in place at the funeral home — and for that we are so thankful. While we certainly don’t wish for his death any time soon, we are grateful that his thoughts and wishes are safely in a file at the funeral home so that, when that time comes, and our heads are spinning with grief, we won’t have to wonder or guess — we will know exactly how best to honor him.

Thank you, Mom and Dad, for this gift. With love from your daughters. ■

Information provided by Sasha Mudlaff and Holly Peterson Miller, family owners, Hamilton’s Funeral Home, 605 Lyon St., Des Moines, IA 50309, 515-243-5221.

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YOUR 2025 3A BOYS SOCCER

STATE CHAMPIONS

Urbandale Boys Soccer win Class 3A State Championship on Friday, June 6, defeating Iowa City Liberty 1-0.



Game photos by Jordan Tran | Team photo by Jared Power

2025 ROSTER

0	Abraham Cung	GK	JR	15	Zachary Glynn	F	SR
3	Brice Lumley	MF	SO	16	Shirake Bajeneza	MF	SO
4	Emmanuel Mauris	F	SO	17	Brendan Bewyer	D	JR
5	Fabrizio DeCoss-Morales	D	SR	18	Sebastian DeCoss-Morales	MF	JR
6	Kayden Kurtz	MF	JR	19	Mason Epperson	MF	JR
7	Zackary Jakobitz	F	JR	20	Will Johnson	D	JR
8	Kenan Hajdarevic	F	SR	21	Abe Dinges	F	SR
9	Messie Ndaruhutse	F	FR	22	Aaden Troja	D	SO
10	Kenin Kapic	MF	JR	23	Osvaldo Marin Patricio	MF	SO
11	Timothy Dang	F	JR	24	Jeff Nziza	F	FR
12	William Reed	D	JR	25	Amisi Abega	D	SR
13	Blane Forinash	D	SR	27	Blake Bullerman	GK	JR
14	Chris Boina	F	SO				

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BROCCOLI and friends salad

Step aside, “Trees and Raisins.” It’s 2025, and there is a new salad in town. The Broccoli and Friends Salad is bursting with flavor and packed with nutrients, making it a fresh favorite you will want to hang on to.

Salads and slaws have come a long way in the past 75 years. I’ll admit, I wasn’t a fan growing up, but now they are the dishes I look forward to most at potlucks. Add some cubed chicken or a piece of salmon, and you have got a light, satisfying meal.

These days, salads are more versatile than ever, thanks to healthier, more creative dressing options ranging from various oils and vinegars to honey, mustard, maple syrup, Greek yogurt, fat-free sour cream and soy sauce. To lighten this recipe, try swapping the mayo for Greek yogurt and cutting the sugar to half a cup. You will still get all the flavor with fewer calories.

Whip up a batch this weekend. You will be glad you did. ■

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



Broccoli and friends salad

Recipe courtesy of “Cookin’ Savvy”
Servings: 4-6

Ingredients:

- 2 medium heads broccoli
- 2 apples
- lemon juice
- 1 carrot
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 cup dried cranberries
- 1 cup sunflower seeds
- 1 cup pecans
- 1 package (2 1/2 ounces) real bacon pieces

Dressing:

- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1/3 cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons poppy seeds

Directions

- Coarsely chop broccoli and place in large bowl.
- Coarsely chop apples and brush with

lemon juice to prevent browning; add to bowl.

- Shred carrot and add to bowl with blueberries, cranberries, sunflower seeds, pecans and bacon.
- To make dressing: Mix mayonnaise, milk, apple cider vinegar, sugar and poppy seeds. Pour over broccoli salad and mix well.



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CHAMBER BASH

Urbandale Chamber BASH was held at Raccoon Valley Bank-Grimes on June 10.



Rod Gullioz and Ron Knapper



Eric William and Travis Springer



Caroline Williams and Brooke Ruddy



Ashley Mahr and Allison Davidson-Motoyama



Kris Howard, Zac Bouslog and Jeff Holiday



Brittany Davis and Melisha Pals



Tammy Renauld and Gina Battani



Julie Deutmeyer and Paige Wilson



Kimberly Baeth and Aaron Colyer



James Sauigular and Caleb Vorpahl



Ashley Scheaffer and Melanie Jacobs

OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON Cutting

A ribbon cutting was held for the Splash Pad at Colby Park on May 30.



A ribbon cutting was held for the Splash Pad at Colby Park on May 30.



Ashlen Sheaffer and Julie Burtnette



Lauren, Jace, Noah and Zach Nelson



Joann Chadwick, Tanya Rosenberger and Abby Hancock



Merrick and Michael Gossen



Charlie, Kit, Roman and Isabel Drake



Nate Luthold and Janelle Thornton



Scott, Lisa and Gabe Gardner



Monique Rodriguez



Aaron Colyer, Ron Guilloz and Scott Nelson



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