

ALTOONA

JULY 2025

# Living

MAGAZINE

# Dream YARDS

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

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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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**SCAN FOR  
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# Dream YARDS

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

By Sean Dengler

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 or 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.

Gary Garles and his wife, Nancy Wells, pay a lot of attention to the details of their landscaping, incorporating many plants that aren't normally found in local yards.





Over the years, Brooke and Nathan Walter have added a variety of features to their yard, but they have maintained open spaces so their dogs can run and play.

## An evolving yard

Brooke and Nathan Walter, who moved to Altoona in August of 2021, say they are pleased with how they made their yard their own.

“It started as a blank slate, and we’ve created unique landscaping and creative plantings,” Brooke says. “It’s a place of peace for us, and we really enjoy being home.”

This Venbury neighborhood couple likes to keep their lawn healthy.

“We use a plant-based fertilizer that is safe for our pets, animals and humans,” Brooke mentions. “We mow and trim regularly.”

Keeping the lawn healthy makes the yard a wonderful place to use, she adds.

“It gives our dogs a place to run, and we are able to play yard games and practice our golf swing,” Brooke says. “It’s also a great space for relaxing, and we always enjoy watching the fireworks each year from our backyard here in Altoona. It’s a place of gathering for friends and family.”

Brooke says she enjoys seeing the continual improvement of the yard.

“Seeing it start from nothing, making improvements each year and creating the oasis it is today,” she says. “We still have big plans for the future.”

She says these improvements have been, in no small part, because of Nathan.

“Nathan replaced the wood deck with a

composite deck by himself. It took him two weeks of labor after his full-time job,” Brooke explains. “He also ripped out both retaining walls and installed newer, modernized walls with lighting, added all the rock and plantings along the side of the house and the pathway in the backyard. The patio on the ground we hired out, but every other update attached to it was done by my husband alone. He also added all the lighting around our home himself. It’s really spectacular at night. It’s been a labor of love for him, and that’s just another reason we are so proud of our yard and how far we’ve come.”

The improvements have helped create wonderful memories.

“Family and holiday gatherings have been a special part for us, as well as our dogs frolicking about in the sun, wind and snow,” Brooke says. “Also, placing the T-Rex sculpture out front. The T-Rex symbolizes an inside joke in the family.”

The Walters take considerable pride in their yard and want others to enjoy it as well.

“By putting in the work and dedication with regular, meticulous maintenance, organic fertilization, as well as being creative with upgrades and improvements all the time, it fosters a positive, healthy, relaxing environment,” Brooke says. “It’s something to be proud of and feel good about, to create your own personal relaxation destination at home. If others take pride in their yard, it increases the value of your neighborhood and home.”



Brooke and Nathan Walter have made their yard their own.

## Options for entertaining and relaxing

All the little parts about a yard make it special for Leslie Bamford and her husband, Andy Smith.

“Our yard is a place we spend time with friends and family and our pets,” Leslie says. “At times, it’s loud and full of people and laughter. Other times, quiet and serene. A little slice of the world that’s just ours to do with as we please. I find gardening to be very relaxing,



and having the ability to turn our yard into what we envisioned before our house was built has been such a joy over the last few years.”

Refining the lawn is important.

“Our lawn is definitely a work in progress,” Leslie says. “We built our house in 2022 and moved in January 2023. My husband, Andy, is in charge of the lawn care. We use a service to treat for weeds and fertilize in the spring and fall. Andy takes a lot of pride in how beautiful our grass is. He is especially proud of his skill in striping the yard when he mows. In the spring and summer, we water as needed. He spends time de-thatching in the fall and aerating, as well as fertilizing, if needed.”

Their dogs enjoy their yard.

“Our three dogs love running in our backyard and barking at people walking by or at the neighbors’ dogs,” Leslie says. “Our Australian shepherd loves to chase her ball in the yard.”

Using their yard’s space is something both Leslie and Andy enjoy.

“We have a concrete patio as well as our deck for relaxing,” Leslie says. “We also have a large area set aside for our son to practice soccer, including a large soccer goal. We had a shed built for storage that also gives the backyard some privacy from the street. We have done some landscaping in the back and have plans for more flower beds in the future in the back. We have flower beds in the front that we put in our first year here that are finally starting to fill in and look beautiful.”

The yard has also provided entertainment options.

“Quiet evenings on the deck or patio by myself reading, watching the sunset,” Leslie mentions. “Chatting with friends on the patio. We had a large gathering over the Fourth of July with everyone in the front yard to watch fireworks. Lying in our soft grass with our son watching the clouds.”

For both Leslie and Andy, the yard is a valuable part of their home.

“We have tried to make our yard an extension of our home, and having that space and flexibility has been so nice,” Leslie says. “Taking pride in your yard and making it a functional space allows you to enjoy the outdoors at home.”

## A career, a hobby, a life

With a former career in landscape design and landscape construction, Gary Garles knows the technical and business sides of how to put forward a great looking yard.

“My career was landscaping,” Gary says. “My hobby was landscaping. I’ve had access for years to all sorts of wholesale nurseries that other people wouldn’t necessarily be able to get ahold of. I’ve been able to acquire some plants that really aren’t on the market for sale. We have some rare, some unusual and some things that are just hard to find. Usually when garden clubs come by here and do a tour, they want to see those things because they’ve never seen them before.”

Maintaining a well-crafted and healthy yard takes time.



Leslie Bamford and her husband, Andy Smith, enjoy relaxing and entertaining in their yard.



Gary Garles and his wife, Nancy Wells, have turned their patio into a quiet retreat.



## FEATURE

"I spend a little time out there every day fussing around doing things," Gary says. "I am from the school where you crowd plants together so that you don't have to weed underneath them. Every couple of years, I do some mulching. I just do regular weed pulling, and that's basically how we take care of it. I don't have an irrigation system or anything here, so I just water with a hose when something needs it."

After establishing beds, shrubs and trees, Gary is now working on the last part of his outdoor "room."

"Mainly what I am buying these days are ground covers," Gary says. "I have the 'ceiling' done with all the trees. I've got the 'furniture' in with all the shrubs and all these nice plants. And now, I'm working on the 'carpet.'"

In addition to "building his outdoor room," Gary and his wife, Nancy Wells, improved the patio.

"We decided we wanted to put a patio in the back and cozy up a place there so we had a place to sit

outside," Gary explains. "We put a tiny little fire pit there. And then my wife says, 'What are you going to do for the actual patio?' And I said, 'I'm just going to throw some gravel down there.' She gave me the stink eye about that like, 'What is going on here?'"

Gary knew the inexpensive, tiny, buckskin-colored rock would do the trick.

"You put that surface down, and it just packs down like those old rock racetracks. This rock just goes down flat as a pancake. It's a very serviceable surface. You can sit on it. It doesn't get weedy. The water soaks through so you don't have a runoff problem."

Gary uses colorful, interesting and minimal maintenance plants. This diversity creates a better ecological system and enjoyment, he says.

"It's very therapeutic to go out and just spend some time in the sun and in the lawn and just do whatever you're doing, planting flowers and everything." ■



A variety of plants adorn the landscaping around the home of Gary Garles and his wife, Nancy Wells.

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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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## 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.



## EDUCATION

By T.K. West

### MEET Richard Lock

Inspired by teachers to become a music educator

Richard Lock grew up with a love of music. While attending school, he joined anything and everything singing-related that he could. Lock credits the many wonderful teachers around him as the original motivation to become a music teacher, especially his late aunt, Missy, who was a middle school choir teacher for more 20 years.

Because of his passion, Lock went on to study music education at Drake University. At the end of his final year in college, he was looking for jobs and saw an opportunity at the Southeast Polk Middle School. Lock says he enjoys working with the district because of the freedom he has to build a new program while feeling supported by the community and the administration.

"Before this year, they did not have sixth-grade vocal music, so being the first to implement was extremely enticing. I also have heard of the really good musical reputation throughout the other grades, and I knew I had to be a part of the team," Lock says.

Lock says that building relationships with his students is vital, and he has worked to create a warm environment where his students can succeed. For example, last school year, Lock's students participated in a multi-day event called "The Choir Olympics" during the ISASP State Testing week. Lock wanted to provide his students with a "brain break" from learning new music after they had worked hard on testing.

During the Olympics, each class participated in five different events, all of which were singing related. Events included seeing how long students could keep their air supported, creating their own warmups, practicing solfège, and answering trivia questions. Each class earned points on a scale of one to five, depending on how well they did. The class at the end of the week that had the most points received a themed party day at the end of the year.

"One thing you can be sure of at the middle school level is that they will always keep you entertained. There is always something new going on," Lock says. "When I am able to make a connection with a student, and we work together to achieve fun end goals, it feels extremely rewarding."

During the summer, Lock is looking forward to relaxation, reflection and preparation. In addition to visiting family and preparing for the upcoming school year, Lock is also planning to research graduate-level programs he can accomplish while teaching.

"I am extremely grateful for everyone who has helped in my journey, and I look forward to continuing my path in music education," Lock says. ■



Richard Lock was given the opportunity to build a sixth-grade vocal music program.

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## SUMMER health risks to seniors

As summer heat intensifies, older adults face elevated health risks. Aging bodies don't regulate temperature as efficiently, and common medications or chronic illnesses can exacerbate the risk. Older adults and their caregivers need to understand the risks and take proactive steps to stay safe in high temperatures.

Awareness is the first line of defense. Seniors should keep track of weather forecasts and heed heat advisories. During peak heat hours, typically from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., it is best to stay indoors in cool, air-conditioned environments. If home cooling isn't available, public spaces like libraries or malls can provide a much-needed respite. Dressing in loose, light-colored clothing and avoiding strenuous outdoor activities are also smart strategies.



Hydration is a critical factor. Older adults often don't feel thirsty when they are dehydrated, making it important to drink water consistently throughout the day. Sipping fluids before feeling thirsty can prevent a number of problems. Avoiding caffeine and alcohol, which can have dehydrating effects, also helps maintain optimal hydration levels.

Home preparation matters, too. Seniors should check that fans or air conditioning units are working before heat waves hit. Simple practices like closing blinds during the day and using fans to circulate air can reduce indoor temperatures. Families and caregivers should check in with their loved ones regularly, especially during extreme heat events, to ensure safety and offer help if needed. Staying connected can make a big difference. Older adults who regularly communicate with friends, family or neighbors are more likely to stay informed about weather changes and get timely assistance if needed. A quick phone call

or text check-in can be a lifeline during heat waves. Social interaction also helps prevent the isolation that can make it harder to recognize or respond to heat-related risks.

Understanding the signs of heat-related illness is crucial. Symptoms such as dizziness, rapid heartbeat, nausea or confusion may indicate heat exhaustion, or worse, heat stroke. Seniors or caregivers noticing these signs should act quickly: move to a cooler area, drink fluids and seek medical help if symptoms do not improve within 30 to 60 minutes.

While hot weather presents unique risks to older adults, it does not have to stand in the way of enjoying the season. With thoughtful planning, proactive steps, and support, seniors can stay cool, hydrated and healthy all summer long. Taking the heat seriously now can mean a more comfortable and safer season ahead. ■

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

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# HOMETOWN roots

Allen returns to live in the neighborhood where she grew up.

Krista Allen is a hometown girl. She grew up in Altoona and has lived in the community nearly her entire life, except for a few years away at college.

She and her husband, Tony, chose to buy their first home in Altoona because they like the community and its proximity to family. They also wanted their children to grow up similarly to how they did, surrounded by loved ones.

The Allens' current home sits in what Allen describes as an older part of Altoona — the very same neighborhood she grew up in, in fact.

"I love the sense of a big, older, safe and memorable neighborhood," she says. "The area where the trees are already fully grown, and you actually have a big yard with room between you and your neighbors."

She also likes living on a corner lot with a large front and side yard, perfect for hosting family and playing outside. Their small starter home is "perfect for our little family," Allen shares.

The number one thing they love about their neighborhood is its proximity to parks.

"We've got several parks within walking distance, so that's great," Allen says. "With my son, we're there almost daily when it's nice outside."

Another thing Allen appreciates is that they live on the corner of a cul-de-sac.

"We get to see our neighbors daily when they're driving by and have become pretty friendly with a lot of them," she says.

Of course, Allen also enjoys the Altoona community as a whole.

"I love that it's growing but is still small enough," she says. "We have some newer businesses that are great for the community, but also ones that have been around my whole life. I love that Altoona has no problem coming together in times of need to support one another — or the opposite, getting together to celebrate the good moments."

Although Allen works at a hospital with long hours and a hectic schedule, she and her family participate in as many community activities as they can, like Easter egg hunts, Sunday music in the park during the summer, fun activities hosted by Hy-Vee, events at the local library, and more.

"Altoona will always be 'home' to me, no matter where I may end up," Allen says. "I love that I trust my neighbors and have close relationships with them. I just feel happy, supported and protected here." ■



Krista Allen and her husband, Tony, chose to buy their first home in Altoona because they like the community and its proximity to family.



# ALTOONA Public Library news

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[www.altoonalibrary.com](http://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.



Beat the heat with free activities and cool new reads at the library before school starts again. Find out more at [altoonalibrary.com](http://altoonalibrary.com).

### Adult programming – ages 18 and older

#### **Glowforge Basics**

**Saturday, Aug. 2 at 2 p.m.**

Interested in using our Glowforge Pro in the Maker Hub? This is where to start! We'll go over safety, cleaning, materials, and basic operation. Once you have completed the session, you'll be issued a certificate that allows you to use the Glowforge independently. Registration required.

#### **Lessons of the Holocaust**

**Thursday, Aug. 7 at 6 p.m.**

Join educator Brad Wilkening as he uses historical accounts and survivors' stories to show why the genocide of World War II is more relevant than ever. Studying this terrible period in human history can be used to build a more compassionate and kinder world today. Registration required.

#### **Book Clubs at Altoona Public Library**

**Thursday, Aug. 21 at 7 p.m. or Monday, Aug. 25 at noon**

Check out our library book clubs and meet other readers. Books for the clubs can be checked out at the circulation desk at the conclusion of the previous month's meeting and are available while supplies last. This month, we are reading "Fuzz: When Nature Breaks the Law" by Mary Roach. No registration required.

### Children's Programming

#### **Life-Size Candyland**

**Saturday, Aug. 9 from 10 a.m. to noon**

Bring your friends to travel through the Lollipop Forest, the Chocolate Swamp, and more to win some sweet treats. Ages 12 and younger. No registration required.

#### **Block Party**

**Wednesday, Aug. 20 from 10-11 a.m.**

Drop in for our Block Party. We're breaking out the Duplos, Magnatiles and more. Ages 8 and younger. No registration required.

#### **Tiny Town**

**Thursday, Aug. 28 from 10-11 a.m.**

Bring your imagination to our tiny cardboard town where preschoolers can explore, socialize and participate in dramatic play. Ages 6 and younger. No registration required.

### Teen Programming – grades 6-12

#### **Button Making**

**Monday, Aug. 4 at 6 p.m.**

Make your own buttons. We bring the button maker and supplies, you bring the creativity. The only limit is your imagination. No registration required.

#### **Bag Charms**

**Thursday, Aug. 14 at 6 p.m.**

Adorn your backpacks, purses and phones with handmade charms. We'll provide the materials, including beads, charms and other accessories to express your style. No registration required.

#### **Pringles Taste Test**

**Monday, Aug. 18 at 3 p.m.**

Think you know your Pringles flavors? Come taste an assortment of these classic snacks to test your skills. No registration required.

To find a complete list of events and to register, visit our website at [altoonalibrary.com](http://altoonalibrary.com). Click on the Upcoming Events tab. ■



# SURVIVING and thriving

Burger shares her story of battling cancer.

While in treatment in 2018, after being diagnosed with a different type of breast cancer in each of her breasts, Shirley Burger, then 64, was introduced to an organization which forever changed her cancer path.

"I was sitting there doing my treatment, and this gal came to sit by my side. Her name was Michelle," Burger says. "She ended up being my patient partner. She introduced me to Can Do Cancer. She, herself, had been through the process with cancer and was a survivor. She was very polite and friendly."

This conversation led to Burger learning about the organization and being put in touch with Deonne Winkel and Linda Hill. She received a gift bag with standard brochures but, more importantly, personal items like a journal and more than \$500 in gift cards to her favorite restaurants. The support went beyond a gift bag and helped her cope during a tough stay in the hospital, which felt more like a prison, she says.

"Michelle was calling me and asking me, 'Is there anything you need me to do?'" Burger says, adding that the emotional support and the relationship they developed helped her through the difficult time. "That's what really drew me to being a patient partner myself."

When Burger was ready, she became a patient partner, serving for five years with different patients around the metro. Recently, she stepped back from patient partnering, but she donated a basket full of goodies for a raffle.

"Through the raffle, I did get a letter from a gal," she says. "She had bought one of my baskets for her mother who had severe Stage 4 cancer, and this lady wrote me personally a letter stating, 'You don't know how much this basket meant to me.' I had included a robe. A woman needs to really stay warm because you are very cold, no matter what type of chemo."

Burger encourages patients to reach out for help. She says there is no cost for Can Do Cancer



Shirley Burger encourages others going through a cancer journey to reach out for support.

services, and nothing is based on income.

"Can Do Cancer, Deonne and Leah, have been a blessing to this organization," she says. "It's just overwhelming to me how easy and lovable they are no matter what the situation is." ■

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# JULY 2025

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**FAX: 515-967-0842**

**Open 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**Monday – Friday**

**Mayor Dean O'Connor**

**515-967-5136**

### City Council Members

**Jeremy Boka 515-965-0951**

**Scott Duer 515-418-2227**

**Josh Dunwoody 515-720-8891**

**Jerry Evans 515-967-5136**

**Julie Stewart 515-967-5136**

### City Administrator

**515-967-5136**

### City Clerk

**515-967-5136**

### Police Chief

**515-967-5132**

### Fire Chief

**515-967-2216**

### Library Director

**515-967-3881**

**Fax: 515-967-6934**

### Water Billing

**515-967-5136**

### Building Department/ Code Enforcement

**515-967-5138**

### Building Official

**515-967-5138**

### Planning & Zoning Department

**515-967-5136**

### Public Works Director

**515-967-5136**



### MURAL ON 1ST

Our new mural is finished! Look for it as you're heading south on 1st Ave S just past 3rd St SW! It will be on the east side of the road! Thank you so much to Sarah Schrijver from Studio Blindspot and Anna Segner for creating such a beautiful mural!



### MOWING REMINDERS

Please do not blow grass clippings into the street. Not only does the city have an ordinance against such action, grass clogs the storm sewer system and creeks, causing flooding and back up problems during heavy rains. Try mulching your grass on your yard. This will cut down on your need for fertilizers.



### UPCOMING CENSUS JOBS

In preparation for the special census Altoona will be conducting in November, there will be multiple opportunities for employment. Go to the link below or scan the QR code for more information about available positions.

[www.altoona-iowa.com/  
news\\_detail\\_T2\\_R247.php](http://www.altoona-iowa.com/news_detail_T2_R247.php)



### ALTOONA POLICE NATIONAL NIGHT OUT – AUGUST 5TH – 6-8PM

**EVERYTHING IS FREE!**

Bring a your family, bring a friend, invite a neighbor, and be part of the biggest event of the year! There will be community businesses and partners with FREE food and swag!

There will be music, games, prizes, food, K9 Demonstration, FD vs. PD competitions, conversations, building connections, plenty of selfies, and MORE!

“National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.”





# EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancelations.

## Coming up in the Altoona 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](mailto: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](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com) with your stories.

## 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.



## Tai Chi Class

Thursdays through Nov. 20, 9:45-10:30 a.m.  
Edencrest at Tuscany, 1600 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona, lower east entrance

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

To submit calendar items for consideration, send to [tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com](mailto:tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com)

## 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, July 27 and 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. July 27 features the band  
SPAM. Aug. 24 features Haywire.

## Vendor Market at Outlets of Des Moines

Saturdays, 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](mailto:k2marketplacemagic@gmail.com).

## Forget-Me-Not: A Silent Auction and Raffle Night

Sept. 30, 4-7 p.m.

Edencrest at Tuscany,  
1600 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona

The event will benefit the  
Alzheimer's Association of Iowa. Enjoy  
an evening of giving, laughter and  
memories as attendees come together to  
support those affected by Alzheimer's  
disease. Residents, families, staff and our  
community are all invited.



## "A Midsummer Night's Dream"

Thursday-Sunday, July 24-27

CAP Theatre and the CAP  
Classic present "A Midsummer  
Night's Dream." Performances on  
Thursday through Saturday are  
performed outdoors at Haines Park  
Amphitheatre, 711 Third Ave. S.E.,  
Altoona, at 7 p.m. In the event of  
inclement weather, performances  
will be moved to CAP Theatre at  
201 First Ave. S. in Altoona. The  
Sunday performance is indoors at  
CAP Theatre at 2 p.m. All tickets  
are \$10, available online and  
onsite with cash or card. For more  
information or to purchase tickets,  
visit [www.captheatre.org](http://www.captheatre.org).

## 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.



## EVENTS IN THE AREA

Be sure to check for cancellations.

### Agent Orange Awareness Day Candlelight Ceremony

Sunday, Aug. 10, 8 p.m.

Enabling Gardens, 1050 First Ave. S.,  
Altoona

The Vietnam War may be over, but the battle continues for many Vietnam veterans. Nearly 3 million service members served in Vietnam, and most returned home. But, since then, thousands of Vietnam veterans have fought illnesses related to Agent Orange exposure. This deadly toxin has impacted the lives of thousands of veterans and their families but is largely unknown to most Americans.

The Altoona American Legion Auxiliary will present a short ceremony to Bring Light to Agent Orange Awareness. Events will include the laying of the Orange Wreath and lighting orange candles in memory of those who have died because of Agent Orange exposure and for those who are still fighting the battle. We honor and remember their sacrifice.

### Summer Vets Games 2025

Saturday, Aug. 2

Sam Wise Park, Altoona

Enjoy six games honoring six branches of the military. Don't Spill Your Drink Army Crawl, Water Balloon Battleship, Bombs Away Bags, Your Left Right Left Human Foosball, Pickle Paddle Relay, and Stratosphere Ladder Golf. Register at [SummerVetsGames.com](http://SummerVetsGames.com).

### 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](http://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.



### 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/>. ■



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## WELLNESS By Tricia Heberer

### SUMMER glow-up

Summer is all about glowing skin, poolside confidence, and feeling your best, but the sun, heat and humidity can also be hard on your complexion. While many people pause treatments during the summer, it is actually one of the best times to invest in skin rejuvenation and protection. Let us talk about how you can maintain (or even improve) your skin's radiance through summer-safe treatments.



During summer months, your skin is exposed to more UV radiation, sweat, oil production and pollutants. This combination can lead to dullness, hyperpigmentation, breakouts, dehydration and accelerated aging.

But that doesn't mean you have to hit pause on professional skincare. It just means choosing treatments that are safe, effective and seasonally appropriate, such as Glo2Facial or any custom facial that adds radiofrequency for a bigger boost to collagen stimulation; MOXI or any summer-safe resurfacing treatments; injectables — Botox and dermal fillers are ideal for refreshing your look; and medical-grade skincare (consult a skincare professional for the best products for your skincare goals).

Summer skincare tips from the pros: always wear SPF (even on cloudy days); hydrate-inside and out (water and hyaluronic acid-based products); schedule treatments around sun exposure (early mornings or after beach trips are ideal); and stick to your professional skincare routine. It matters even more in summer.

Find a skincare professional nearest you and book a consultation. ■

Information provided by Tricia Heberer, Owner/LE, Luxe Medical Spa and Aesthetics, 88 Paine Circle, Suite 7, Bondurant, 515-630-8637, [theberer@luxemedicalspa.net](mailto:theberer@luxemedicalspa.net).

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## WELLNESS By Nikki Morgan

### UNDERSTANDING melasma

Melasma is a common skin condition that causes brown or gray-brown patches, typically on the face. It most often appears on the cheeks, forehead, upper lip, and chin, and while it can affect anyone, it is most common in women and individuals with medium to darker skin tones. Hormones, sun exposure and genetics play a role.



One of the most frustrating aspects of melasma is its stubbornness. Unlike a sunspot or acne scar, melasma can be chronic and recurring. It is triggered by UV light, heat and even visible light — so daily sun protection is non-negotiable. A broad-spectrum SPF of 30 or higher, along with physical blockers like zinc oxide, are essential for preventing flare-ups.

Treatment options vary depending on skin type and severity. Topical treatments often include ingredients like hydroquinone, azelaic acid, kojic acid and tranexamic acid to help lighten the pigment. In-office procedures such as DiamondGlow, chemical peels, microneedling and low-energy lasers can accelerate results but should be approached cautiously and always under the care of a qualified provider. Over-treating or using the wrong modality can actually make melasma worse.

Managing melasma requires a combination of consistency, patience and professional guidance. While it may not be fully curable, it can be significantly improved with the right regimen and expert support. When in doubt, consult a skin professional to customize a plan that's safe and effective for you. ■

Information provided by Nikki Morgan, DNP, ARNP, SkinFusion, 200 Second St. S.E., Altoona, 515-967-0587, [www.skinfusionfx.com](http://www.skinfusionfx.com), [nikki.skinfusionfx@gmail.com](mailto:nikki.skinfusionfx@gmail.com)



## HEALTH

By Ashley Powell

# BEAT the heat with CBD

Summer brings sunshine, outdoor activities and, unfortunately, heat-related soreness and fatigue. Whether you're hiking, gardening or chasing kids around the pool, your body can feel the effects. CBD offers natural support to help you recover, recharge and keep going strong.

CBD works with the body's endocannabinoid system to help manage inflammation, pain and stress. When used regularly, it can ease swelling in muscles and joints, making it easier to bounce back after long, active days. It also supports pain management without the side effects linked to many medications.

CBD drinks and tinctures are great for hot weather, offering hydration and relief in one. Topical products like creams and roll-ons are perfect for targeting sore areas after outdoor activity or long hours on your feet.

Recent research supports this, too. A 2022 randomized study found that CBD and CBG in a recovery drink helped reduce soreness and improve muscle recovery after exercise. A 2023 review also showed CBD's ability to regulate inflammation markers like IL-6 and TNF-alpha, both tied to soreness and fatigue.

Shopping in-store gives you access to high-quality, lab-tested products and knowledgeable consultants who can help you find the best option for your needs. Plus, you can sample products and learn how to use them. ■

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. References: Mustroph, M. L., et al. (2022). Pilot study on CBD and CBG beverage use for DOMS recovery. Mayeux, J. P., et al. (2023). Cannabidiol's effect on inflammation: A review. Frontiers in Pharmacology.





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## HEALTH

By Dr. Kari Swain and Dr. Elizabeth Ellrich

# SET yourself up for back-to-school success

Kids and teachers will be heading back to school in just a month. Often the transition back to school can come with challenges, but it doesn't have to. By supporting the overall health of our kids and ourselves, we can prepare the nervous system to adapt to stress, strengthen the immune system and build health. Start these habits now and continue them throughout the school year.

**Start chiropractic care.** Summer is an ideal time to have children and adolescents evaluated by a board-certified pediatric chiropractor. A comprehensive consultation and neurologically focused examination can identify how specific chiropractic adjustments can help your child function at their highest potential this school year. Chiropractic boosts immune system function, helps regulate emotions, improves attention span, addresses forward head posture created by screen use and supports active kids and athletes.

**Get in your bedtime and sleep routine.** If you've fallen into the habit of staying up too late and sleeping all day this summer, now is the time to turn it around. Turn off electronics after dinner. Spend time outside in natural light. Read or do a meditation to wind down.

**Make daily hydration a priority.** Kids and adults should drink half their body weight in ounces of water daily and more if they are very active. Send a water bottle to school and make sure to have one available at pick up or send an extra in their backpack if they take the bus.

**Prepare nutrient-dense meals.** Send a packed lunch to school and support them at home with healthy breakfasts, snacks and dinners. ■


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

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# MONEY market account vs. money market fund

While both have the shared goal of helping you grow your savings, a money market account and fund are quite different in how they work and what they offer. Knowing the key differences can help you choose the right option for your financial situation.



## The differences between money market accounts and money market funds

### Money market account:

- Offered at a bank or credit union
- Considered low risk, as the principal is protected by deposit insurance (e.g. FDIC or NCUA insurance funds)
- Easy access to funds, often with check-writing and debit card privileges

- Money is held as a deposit, not an investment
- Typically offer higher interest rates than regular savings accounts, but generally lower than money market funds
- May have monthly fees, which can typically be waived by meeting minimum balance requirements

### Money market fund:

- Offered at brokerage firms and fund companies
- Not deposit-insured, but may be covered by SIPC (Securities Investor Protection Corporation) when held in a brokerage account
- Considered low risk but not risk-free as the value of the fund can fluctuate
- Funds are accessed by selling shares, which may take a day or two to process
- Money is invested in short-term, low-risk securities

- Generally, offer higher returns than money market accounts, but also come with some risk
- May have expense ratios, which are fees charged to manage the fund

### Which option is right for you?

A money market account works well if you are seeking the security of deposit insurance and consistent interest rates, especially for emergency funds.

Money market funds work well if you are seeking to capitalize on investment or market opportunities with somewhat higher risk.

To learn more about a money market account, speak with a banker or financial advisor today. ■

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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**Mary Simon**

VP, Altoona Branch Manager



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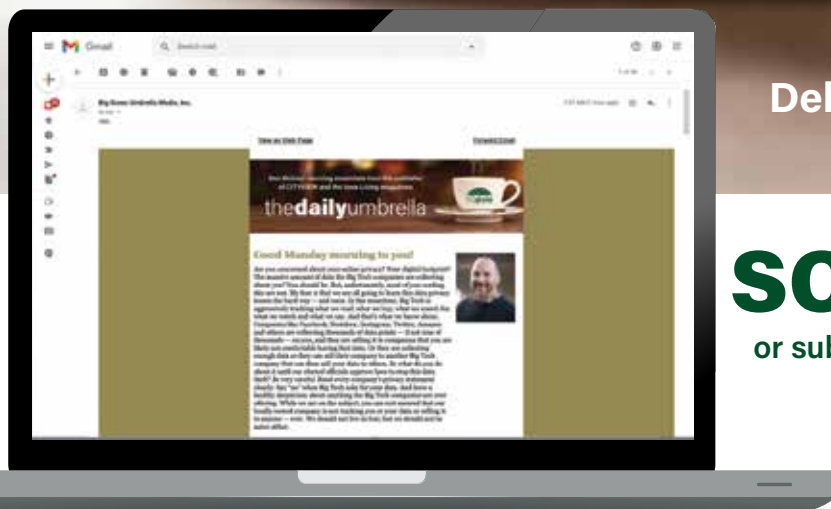
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# THE REASON you are missing out on life

Do you want to hear a really bad joke? Good. “What does a conductor who got distracted say?” “Oh no, I lost my train of thought!” That was bad, I know. But have you been there? Distracted?



Distractions are everywhere. Eighty-one percent of people admit to interrupting conversation, mealtime or playtime with family or friends to check their social media, text messages or email. We have been led to what has been called, “continuous partial attention.” In other words, we so expect distraction that we exist in a constant state of alertness that scans the world but never really gives our full attention to anything.

Distraction has consequences. We miss out on what’s most important. We give our attention to the latest notification, the most urgent demand, the person yelling the loudest. But we fail to give our attention to our spouse or child, a stranger who needs our help, or the very presence of God in our midst. We miss out on life itself.

Moses was a man who knew the importance of paying attention (Exodus 3). One day he was out in the wilderness when he noticed something. There was a bush, a bush on fire, and the crazy thing was, it wasn’t burning up. Moses noticed it. He was paying attention. So, he stopped and went over to see it. I wonder: How many other people walked by that same burning bush but didn’t notice? How many times had Moses walked by and failed to notice?

But this time, Moses did notice. He wasn’t distracted, and, because of that, he got to be present to the presence of God. And because he paid attention to God, he became aware of his people’s needs and was sent on an incredible mission that impacted millions of lives. All because he was undistracted.

Distraction and sin have the same result: They separate us from God. The evil one’s main tactic today is not to convince you that God doesn’t exist, but rather to distract you enough so you settle for some bland, mediocre version of faith. But Jesus came to give you life and life to the full (John 10:10). That abundant life is experienced in being present to God and to the people around you.

So, take a step into a less distracted life. You get to control your phone; don’t let it control you. Smile and say, “Hi!” to the person you meet. Talk with the people you are with. And remember God is always with you. Let that blow your mind for a moment. The One who made you — the One who loves you more than you can imagine — He’s always with you. Talk with Him. Listen to Him. Notice Him. God is there with you and for you. Don’t miss out.

Focus on what matters most. ■

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

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# CASTING a vision

The reason I love what I do stems from being passionate about the community and the people who were integral in raising me up and handing me over to my life's work. I grew up watching my parents, my friends' parents and their friends and associates work hard to make Altoona what it is today — a thriving, mini-metropolis full of energy and unlimited potential. I get to witness firsthand Southeast Polk grads come back to the town they love and build businesses and grow their families. The circle of love for Altoona is great, and we are special.



Six years ago, the Board of Directors for the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce joined staff in the task of revitalizing Olde Town. Mind you, we were in a global pandemic with limited resources, but we knew this could be a project that our community could get excited about — something to look forward to. After all, Olde Town was where it all started back in 1868, bustling with commerce. In the 150-plus years since our founding, there have been many community leaders or groups that have invested time and treasures in keeping this area alive. We are no different, but it does feel a little more like a movement.

Chamber staff and leadership, along with our partners at the city, have a plan that includes facelifts for existing buildings, a pocket park showcasing beautiful art and areas to read or have a pop-up market, filling up empty buildings with restaurants and retail, working with the Arts and Culture Commission for creative wayfinding and more. The potential for monthly events and block parties is huge and will increase foot traffic because we're giving individuals and families something more to do in this entertainment-focused town.

This movement may seem slow, but, know this, it is calculated and intentional. I am reminded of the East Village journey. In 1970, businesses began reinvesting in that area. It wasn't until 2001 (31 years later — eek) that the city of Des Moines put a strategic plan for development together. After many failed start-ups early on, it finally got “sexy” with consistent traffic and established retail around 2008-2010, and it continues to evolve to this day.

A special “thank you” to Olde Town businesses for getting behind the project, taking advantage of the façade program and doing what you can to market this up and coming area. We know it hasn't been easy, but we so appreciate what you bring to our community.

Rome wasn't built in a day. East Village took years to come to fruition. Have faith, Olde Town is on its way. ■

Information provided by Melissa Horton, Executive Director, 119 Second St. S.E., Suite A, Altoona, 515-967-3366, [melissahorton@altoonachamber.org](mailto:melissahorton@altoonachamber.org).



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## #COMMUNITY



# SUMMER Picnic

The Caring Hands Summer Family Picnic was held on July 12.



Ron Roske



Darla Parke and Marie Goodridge



Laura Bowie and Kay Brown



Toni and Dave Parkins



Pat Gilliatt and Deb Stearns



Jamie Bogaard and Dan Brix



Randi Radosevich



Sherry VanderPloeg



Drew Byes, Brady Betts, Bennet Bartels, Gage Schute, Dallas Dykstra, Konrad Tasler and Aidan Cavan



Jess Daab



Dawn Colunga, Louie West and Brianna Gardner



Diane Ingleby and Jodi Urich



# GOLF Outing

The Annual Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce Golf Outing was held on July 11 at Toad Valley Golf Course.

Photos by Kennedy Wilson



Jake Schilling and Chris Eaton



Dr. Chris Reil



Kevin Hyberger, Damian Bell and Jeff Larkins



Brad Lamberti, Riley Lockwood, Brian Haines and Scott Belger



Anna Cook and Kelly Lamb



Brooke Thompson



Gregg Thompson and Jeremy Taylor



Missy Halferty and Nguyen Le



Jonathan Yesulis



Ben and Tony Bakeris



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