

Living

MAGAZINE

RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Northwest Metro
residents share
their favorites.



**Urbandale girls qualify
for state tennis**
EDUCATION

**Creamy
tomato soup**
RECIPE

**Dance party, authors
and puzzles**
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WELCOME

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Residents' Choice. Those two simple words have a lot of meaning to those who are recognized and those who seek out the people, businesses, places and events that are honored.

Yes, we have once again compiled the results of our local Residents' Choice poll, the only one of its kind. It is truly unique in two significant ways.

First, our poll is mailed to every residential household in the pages of this magazine with a link to an open website. That makes the poll available to every single resident. No exclusions.

Second, our poll has open-ended questions, which means we don't load the ballots with pre-determined answers to try to sway it in a certain way. The results are what they are. You will likely agree with some of them, and you will disagree with others — kind of like political elections. But, in this poll, all who are recognized are winners, and the end result is a great positive for all involved.

Readers of this publication have proven to seek out the winners and spend their time, energy and money with them. The poll results have become a customized search engine of sorts, providing valuable information on the choices of local residents in a variety of categories that are important to them.

Those who have been chosen tell me how much of an impact this directly has on them, their businesses and their organizations. Being recognized for positive contributions is seemingly always great, but when it helps create commerce, it is even better — and this Residents' Choice poll is a commerce-creating machine.

Other organizations are continuing to try to implement polls like ours, but none have the reach and credibility that ours has. You can't blame others for trying to imitate what we do, but you can question how they implement their polls and how many people actually vote in them.

Meanwhile, I thank all of you who took the time to vote in this year's Residents' Choice poll. Your votes do make an incredible difference. And, if you didn't vote, well, there is always next year.

Thanks for reading. ■



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RESIDENTS' CHOICE AWARDS

Northwest Metro residents share their favorites.



The staff of Life Time, voted Residents' Choice for favorite health club or gym.

Residents in the Northwest Metro communities of Grimes, Dallas Center, Johnston, Urbandale and Clive have again weighed in on their favorite businesses, people, events and places in the latest Residents' Choice poll. The poll results share residents' top three choices in dozens of categories, many of which are extremely competitive with only a handful of votes separating the winner from the runners up. Consequently, we view them all as winners. They have captured the favor of people who live in the Northwest Metro area and who know the businesses, people, events

and places of the area best.

Some winners are repeating at the top of their categories. Their supporters have proven to be a loyal bunch. Others are new to the awards list, showing they have made a good impression over the last year and are building up a strong following as well.

Urbandale residents will find many of the winners and runners up in their own community, from Generation Next Child Development Center and Preschool, voted Residents' Choice for favorite preschool/daycare, to Urbandale 4th of July Celebration,

a favorite community festival; Art of Life Salon and Spa, favorite hair salon; and Life Time, favorite health club or gym. These are only a few of the Urbandale winners. Read on for the others.

If you aren't familiar with any of the top three, give those businesses, events and places a visit and find out why they are residents' favorites. And, if you didn't vote this year, be sure to do so next time. It may be your vote that makes a difference and lifts one of your favorites into the top tier of the Residents' Choice poll.

Johnston, Grimes, Dallas Center, Urbandale and Clive Residents' Choice for Favorite Northwest Metro...

(Please note: Runners up are listed in alphabetical order.)

Restaurant: Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Destination Grille; The Urban Grill

Restaurant for Dessert: Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Heavenly Delights; Van Dee's Ice Cream Shoppe

Coffee Shop: Starbucks

Runners up: Friedrichs Coffee; Lightbrite Coffee Roasters

Restaurant for Breakfast: Cozy Cafe

Runners up: 100th St. Corner Café; Perkins Restaurant and Bakery

Restaurant for Lunch: Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Charlotte's Kitchen; Palmer's Deli

Restaurant for Dinner: Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Destination Grille; The Urban Grill

Place for Ice Cream: Van Dee's Ice Cream Shoppe

Runners up: Al's Dairy Freeze; Heavenly Delights

Pizza Establishment: Pagliai's Pizza

Runners up: Casey's; Pepp's Pizzeria

Bar: Doc's Lounge

Runners up: Pour Choices Neighborhood Bar; Stevie C's

Catering Company: Cyd's Catering

Runners up: Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar; Hy-Vee Catering

Server/Bartender: Heather Loops, Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Cycrena Eischeid, The Cork 50131; Mary Ann Lee, Doc's Lounge

Auto Service: FinishLine Auto Works

Runners up: Christian Brothers Automotive; Shade Tree Auto

Auto Body Shop: FinishLine Body & Paint

Runners up: Graham Collision; Minor Wreck Express

Car Dealership: Willis Auto Campus

Runners up: Bob Brown; Toyota of Des Moines

Auto Parts Store: O'Reilly Auto Parts

Runners up: AutoZone Auto Parts; NAPA Auto Parts

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FEATURE

Preschool/Daycare: Generation Next Child Development Center and Preschool

Runners up: Johnston KinderCare; Loving Arms Children's Center

Nonprofit: Johnston Partnership

Runners up: Goodwill of Central Iowa; Urbandale Food Pantry

School: Johnston High School

Runners up: Beaver Creek Elementary; Des Moines Christian School

Park: Terra Park

Runners up: Dewey Park; Walker Johnston Park

Community Festival or Event: Johnston Green Days

Runners up: Grimes Governors Days; Urbandale 4th of July Celebration

Church: Lutheran Church of Hope

Runners up: New Hope Assembly of God; Summitcreek Church



Owner Shelly Bettis, left, and the staff of Art of Life Salon and Spa, voted Residents' Choice for favorite Hair Salon.

Pastor: Jeremy Carr, NorthPoint Church

Runners up: Andy Hermanson, Lutheran Church of Hope; Mike Housholder, Lutheran Church of Hope

Chamber of Commerce: Johnston Chamber of Commerce

Runners up: Grimes Chamber & Economic Development; Urbandale Chamber of Commerce

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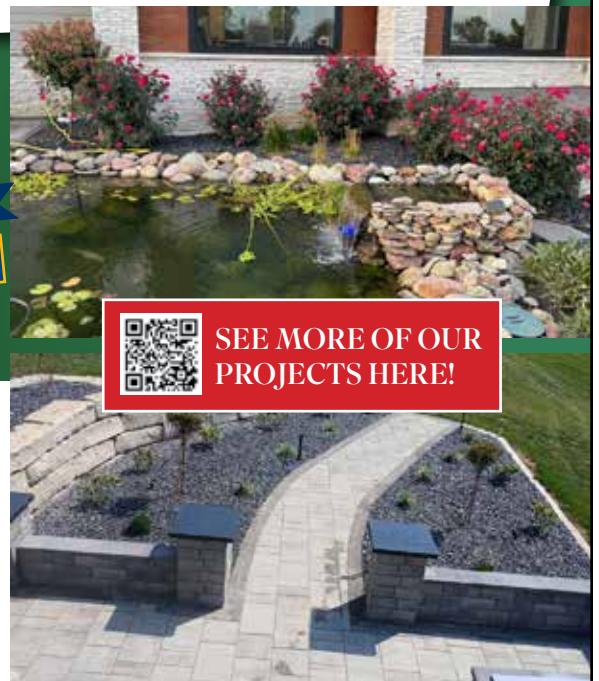
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FEATURE

Grocery Store: Fareway

Runners up: Aldi; Hy-Vee

Boutique: Purple Poppy Boutique

Runners up: Charlie Rae's; Styled. by JJ

Retail Store: Purple Poppy Boutique

Runners up: Styled. by JJ; Target

Thrift Store: Many Hands Thrift Market

Runners up: Goodwill of Central Iowa; Stuff Etc

Home Improvement Retail Store: Menards

Runners up: Johnston Ace Hardware; The Home Depot

Liquor Store: Hy-Vee Wine and Spirits

Runners up: Fareway; Grimes Liquor Shop

Nursery or Garden Center: Canoyer Garden Center

Runners up: Piney Ridge Greenhouse; Earl May Nursery and Garden Center

Place to Purchase a Gift for a Man: The Home Depot

Runners up: Menards; Target

Place to Purchase a Gift for a Woman: Purple Poppy Boutique

Runners up: Charlie Rae's; Styled. by JJ

Dad/Child Date Spot: The Little Gym of Johnston

Runners up: Climb Iowa; Terra Park

Mom/Child Date Spot: The Little Gym of Johnston

Runners up: Artfull – An Art and Craft Playground; Glazed Expressions

Place to Take Your Mom and Dad: Trostel's Greenbriar Restaurant and Bar

Runners up: Destination Grille; The Cork 50131

Place to Take Your Kids or Grandkids: The Little Gym of Johnston

Runners up: Sky Zone Trampoline Park; Grimes Waterworks Park Splash Pad

Place for Children's Birthday Parties: The Little Gym of Johnston

Runners up: Emerge Academy; Sky Zone Trampoline Park

Golf Course: Jester Park Golf Course

Runners up: Beaver Creek Golf Club; Hyperion Field Club

Hair Salon: Art of Life Salon & Spa

Runners up: Pure Salon Aveda; Talking Heads Salon

Health Clinic: MercyOne

Runners up: The Iowa Clinic; UnityPoint

Dental Office: Grove and Platt Dental Associates

Runners up: Furrow Family Dentistry; The Dental Studio of Iowa

Orthodontist Office: Mann Orthodontics

Runners up: Iowa Orthodontic Solutions; Stork Orthodontics

Mental Health Services: Pink Couch Wellness

Runners up: Clive Behavioral Health; Family Legacy Counseling

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FEATURE

Chiropractic Office: Herrmann Family Chiropractic

Runners up: Impact Health Institute; Kleckner Chiropractic Clinic

Vision Care: Lifetime Vision

Runners up: Precision Family Eyecare; Total Family Eye Care

Health Club or Gym: Life Time

Runners up: Emerge Academy; Planet Fitness

Pharmacy: Hy-Vee Pharmacy

Runners up: Medicap Pharmacy; Walgreens Pharmacy

Cosmetic Services: Central Iowa

Dermatology

Runners up: 515 Wellness and Aesthetics; SOMA Cosmetic Surgery & Aesthetics

Physical Therapy: Athletico Physical Therapy

Runners up: DMOS; Elevate Physical Therapy and Sports Medicine



Generation Next Child Development Center and Preschool, which has multiple locations, was chosen as Residents' Choice favorite preschool/daycare. Pictured are co-directors of the Urbandale center, Kristy Scherr and Paula Garza.

Dance Studio: Inspiring Dance

Runners up: Dance Vision; Eshanjali Dance Academy

Gymnastics Studio: The Little Gym of Johnston

Runners up: Emerge Academy; Mid Iowa Gymnastics

Tumbling Studio: The Little Gym of Johnston

Runners up: Emerge Academy; Tribe Athletics

Financial Planner: Loren Merkle, Merkle Retirement Planning

Runners up: McGill Junge Wealth Management; Sharon Vickery, Edward Jones

Law Firm: Letsch Law Firm

Runners up: Abendroth Russell Barnett Law Firm; Brown, Fagen and Rouse

Accounting Firm: ThornTree CPA Services

Runners up: Ann M Hartz, CPA and Associates; Welgaard CPAs and Advisors

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FEATURE

Veterinarian: Prairie View Animal Hospital

Runners up: Value Vet; Westfield Veterinary Hospital

Dog Groomer: Clean and Breezy

Runners up: Bark Shop; Woof Pack Resort & Spa

Pet Care: Woof Pack Resort & Spa

Runners up: Dog Days and Cat Naps; Dogwoods Lodge

Lawn Care Business: Finer Cuts Lawn Care

Runners up: Kaldenberg's PBS Landscaping & Lawn Care; Nate's Lawn Care

Landscaping Company: Kaldenberg's PBS Landscaping & Lawn Care

Runners up: Kleener Image; Mhuka Designs

Heating and Cooling Business: Golden Rule Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Electrical

Runners up: Kohles & Bach Heating & Cooling; Heartland Heating & Cooling

Electrical Business: Deaver Electric

Runners up: ARC Electric; Golden Rule Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Electrical

Plumbing Company: Golden Rule Plumbing, Heating, Cooling, Electrical

Runners up: Herr Plumbing; Roto-Rooter

Senior Living Establishment: Brio of Johnston Senior Living Community

Runners up: Bishop Drumm Retirement Center; Edencrest at Green Meadows

Insurance Company: Health Insurance Advisor, LLC

Runners up: Andrea Sabus, State Farm Insurance; Glenn Waterhouse III, State Farm Insurance

Realtor: Joleen Roskamp, RE/MAX Precision

Runners up: Casee Woodley, RE/MAX Precision; Nichole Rector, Legacy Realty of Iowa

Bank/Credit Union: Veridian Credit Union

Runners up: Charter Bank; Community Choice Credit Union

Photographer: Carlye Bishop Photography

Runners up: Jordan Sandquist Creative; Lens Art Photography by Larry Trager

Place for Guests to Stay: Hilton Garden Inn

Runners up: Holiday Inn & Suites Des Moines-Northwest; Stoney Creek Hotel and Conference Center

Exterior Contractor (siding, roofing, windows, doors): Sonntag Roofing

Runners up: Buresh Home Solutions, Inc.; Right Roofing and Siding

Pest Control: Preferred Pest Control

Runners up: Diam Pest Control; Janssen Pest Solutions

Tree Service: MJ's Tree Service

Runners up: Beaver Tree Service; The Tree Doctor ■

ELECTION

CITY and school board elections upcoming

City and school board elections are Tuesday, Nov. 4.

The city council is responsible for establishing city ordinances, the city budget and city policies. It decides the laws for the community and how its tax dollars are spent. The mayor acts as the chief executive officer of the city and presides over the city council meetings. Communities with city administrators assign some of the mayor's executive duties to administrators.

School boards set the policies and budget for the school district within the parameters set by the state.

To find your polling location, visit: <https://apps.sos.iowa.gov/elections/voterreg/pollingplace/search.aspx>.



Urbandale city andidates

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Robert Andeweg

City Council member at-large (two seats)

Joe Cacciatore

Amy Croll

Urbandale Community School Board

Three At-large seats

Hannah Horton

Rachel Kent

Marc Salmon

Rodrigo Santizo

Public Measure

Summary: To adopt a Revenue Purpose Statement specifying the use of revenues the Urbandale Community School District will receive from the State of Iowa Secure an Advanced Vision for Education Fund. For the exact wording, visit https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/media/4fbjmxqv/2025_school_candidates_updated100625.pdf. ■



ESTATE planning after a divorce

Divorce is never easy. Even the most amicable separation has many emotional elements and practical problems. One of the last things you think about is your estate planning. But, after a divorce, you should update your estate plan.



Your last will and testament or revocable trust nominates someone to settle your estate, provides how assets should be distributed, and nominates a guardian for minor children. You may have other estate-planning concerns, like long-term management of assets through a trust or provisions for children with special needs.

In Iowa, divorce generally revokes all provisions in favor of an ex-spouse. The ex-spouse will not inherit through your will or trust. Iowa law also automatically

voids beneficiary designations on retirement accounts, life insurance and other investments.

However, this may mean that your assets will pass to a secondary beneficiary or to your estate. If the beneficiary is cancelled, you should update beneficiary designations. This will prevent the asset holder from mistakenly sending benefits to your ex-spouse. For annuities, if the payments have irrevocably commenced, they will continue to be distributed to the former spouse.

If your spouse is listed as your agent under a financial power of attorney, the agency terminates as soon as the divorce action is filed. For a health care directive, the spouse's authority is revoked upon the entry of the divorce decree. Your spouse will still be your health care proxy during the divorce proceedings.

Even though the law automatically puts some protections in place, you still need to

update your estate planning. You should make changes in your powers of attorney as soon as possible so that you don't give financial authority or medical decision-making rights to your soon-to-be former partner.

If you want assets to pass directly to a beneficiary, and not into your estate, you should designate a new beneficiary. Joint tenancy property should be addressed. So should guardianship of minor children. Even if your ex-spouse would be the custodial parent if you die, you may want to put someone else in charge of the money you leave to your children.

Consult with an experienced attorney to discuss how your divorce changes your estate plan. Drafting new documents to reflect your wishes will give you peace of mind as you start a new chapter in your life. ■

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

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INVESTMENT

By Daniel Rundahl

DO interest rates really matter?



When I was growing up on the farm in the mid-1980s, I can remember distinctly the frustration my father shared with the family over how much the interest was on the new manure spreader and feed grinder. This didn't mean much to me and my siblings as we were preparing our backpacks at night for show and tell the next day, but it holds value now for me as a husband and father with a mortgage and adult bills. Let's look at that through different eyes.

For the stock market: In late September, the FED announced a .25% interest rate drop and plans for two more interest rate changes in October and December. Initially, the stock market has favored this change, and language of this interest rate drop was already "baked into the markets." However, in October — and to finish off the holiday season — your 401K could see a boost with a potential 1% additional drop. This reduction of interest rates stimulates the economy by making borrowing cheaper for businesses and consumers, which tends to drive positive steam toward stock market equities.

For the economy: Historically, the health of the economy, or lack of, has usually been measured by many factors; however, four well-known major measurements reported over the four weeks of a month include: The Jobs Report, housing sales, prices at the pump and consumer spending (prices at the grocery store). The measure of any good standing macro or micro economy is the "motion of money." By reflection, favorable interest rates, as interpreted by consumers, will reduce unemployment, increase home sales, drive down fuel prices and increase consumer spending across all blue- and white-collar factors.

For your retirement: Many retired or near-retired individuals are seeking diversity away from higher risk investments. They are staring down the tunnel of the next 30 years of their life with the broad unanswered question, "Have I saved enough for the long haul?" In the last few years since the drop of COVID, we witnessed an interest rate hike of vast proportions. Overnight in the third and fourth quarter of 2021, CD rates saw 6% and 7% changes. Fixed and Fixed Indexed Annuities saw guarantees with 12% and bonuses to make dramatic relocations, and home rates rose to 8%. This change was attractive but short term. For this "30-year tunnel," it was a seasonal flower with a short-lived show. So, how should you be planning for retirement when so much fear lies around the short game of interest rates?

First, take a breath. At every age, we've leaned on a personal advisor. My wrestling coach emphasized technique, training and conditioning; my teachers urged study, hard work and focus for the long game; and when our children were born, wise voices guided how to raise the next generation. My point...in all the chaos, and especially this time of year, it may be a good time to set that appointment with an advisor for your retirement. Blessings for a safe and productive fall season. ■

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.

URBANDALE girls participate at state tourney

Pederson and Thielman qualify in tennis.

Urbandale Seniors Danni Pederson and Sydney Thielman advanced to the the Girls State Tennis Tournament, marking an unforgettable milestone in their careers. For both players, this journey started long before high school. Their path to state can be traced back seven years, when their fifth-grade



Sydney Thielman, Coach Maertens and Danni Pederson

elementary teacher — now their high school coach, Mr. Maertens — first encouraged them to pick up a racquet. Sydney was in Maertens' class, while Danni was just next door. That summer, the two began attending tennis clinics together, sparking a love for the sport that never faded.

What began as casual summer practices turned into years of dedication, countless hours of training, and an unshakable drive to succeed. That hard work has paid off. For Danni, this was her second straight state appearance, while Sydney celebrated her first qualification.

Qualifying is no small feat. In high school tennis, there are only two divisions, and competition in the CIML Conference is among the toughest in the state. Urbandale regularly faces schools twice its size, and, in recent years, the Final Four teams and eventual state champions have almost always come from this league. That challenging schedule sharpened the J-Hawks' skills and prepared them for the pressure of postseason play.

This season was also special because it marked the first time Danni and Sydney teamed up as doubles partners. Their chemistry was instant — on and off the court. The duo launched their season with an impressive win over Dowling's top doubles team and carried that momentum all the way to regionals, where they defeated a strong Waukee pair to clinch their spot at state.

But beyond the stats and victories, what sets these two apart is their character, Coach Maertens says.

"Danni and Sydney are both outstanding tennis players, but, more importantly, they're exceptional people," Maertens says. "They've combined natural talent with years of hard work and the right attitude. For me, it's been a privilege not only to teach them in elementary school, but to coach them in high school as well."

Together, Danni and Sydney embody the spirit of Urbandale Tennis — commitment, resilience, and friendship," Maertens adds. As they step onto the state stage, they carry with them not just the pride of a season's work, but the legacy of years of dedication to the game and to each other. ■

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URBANDALE COUNCIL RECAP



National Disability Employment Awareness Month

October 8, 2025 - Council Meeting

The Mayor and the City Council met on Wednesday, October 8, and began with a proclamation recognizing National Disability Employment Awareness Month. The Urbandale Water Utility is working on plans for an Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) well in western Urbandale near the current 170th Street water tower—an infrastructure play to lock in safe, reliable drinking water for decades. ASR wells store treated water underground during low-demand months, then pulls it back when it's hot, dry, or demand spikes. The City Council approved a noise ordinance waiver for the project, setting the stage for the next steps which include designing the project (details like diameter,

target aquifer, injection/recovery rates). Construction on the ASR well could likely begin in 2027. This ASR well is a long-horizon investment—quietly building a margin of safety into Urbandale's water system so households and businesses can count on clean, dependable water in dry spells, growth years, and everything in between. The City Council will meet again at 5:30 PM on Wednesday, October 22, 2025.

September 16, 2025 - Council Meeting

The Mayor and City Council met on Tuesday, September 16, and set a public hearing to consider noise control options for the Urbandale Water Utility's ASR well project.

Staff walked through progress on the Sustainable Urbandale Action Plan (SUAP). Earlier this year, the City launched a one-stop-shop sustainability hub, which has already drawn more than 3,000 unique visitors. Work continues on Action G2 from the plan—allowing and encouraging native plantings—city staff are targeting a vetted recommendation to be brought to the City Council by December 2025. The City Council also reviewed a study about solar feasibility that could cover six City facilities.

Starting at the end of October, City Council Meetings will take place at 5:30 PM in-person and on live stream.

September 2, 2025 - Council Meeting

The Mayor and City Council met on Tuesday, September 2, and began with a series of special presentations. Two Urbandale firefighters—Lieutenant Cook and Driver/Engineer Klenk—were formally sworn into their new roles. Family, friends, and colleagues joined to celebrate their promotions. Mayor Andeweg also issued two proclamations. The first recognized National Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15–Oct. 15), highlighting the contributions of Hispanic and Latino residents and the second proclaimed September as National Library Card Sign-Up Month, with library staff sharing details about contests, programs, and the broader role of the Urbandale Public Library in supporting education and community connection.



KEEP THE KIDS BUSY THIS FALL!

Registration is open for Urbandale's fall classes and programs! Look at our listing of Youth Programs, Adult Programs, Adaptive Programs, and Senior Programs online at www.Urbandale.org/programs. Each activity has a link under the description so you can easily register with our online registration system.

KINDERMUSIK—GO, GO, GO! *Ages 6 months—4 yrs \$86*

Ready? Set? Go, Go, Go! You and your child will chug-a-lug, beep-beep, and swish your oars while you explore vehicle sounds and the stop-and-go, this-way and that-a-way movements of trains, cars, and boats. Transportation songs, stories, activities, and musical learning wind their way through this movement and sensory-rich exploration to build physical confidence and coordination. Buckle up, here we go! (This class is for child AND caregiver) *Registration Deadline is November 5*

SCHOOL'S OUT YOUTH GOLF CLINIC *Ages 7-13 \$140*

Looking for a fun and engaging way to keep your kids active when school is out? Join us for our Youth Golf Clinic, led by a local Certified PGA professional at the NEW Elevation Golf Club in Urbandale! These clinics are designed to develop the fundamentals of golf in a fun, age-appropriate environment. *Registration Deadline is November 25*

AFTER SCHOOL IMMERSIVE ART PROGRAM WITH PAINTING WITH A TWIST *2nd–6th grade \$150*

Over the course of the 5-week Intro to Art session, we'll delve into the elements and principles of art, art history, color theory and mixing, famous painters, painting tools, and painting techniques, among other topics. Participants will complete several paintings that reflect what they've learned.

Tuesdays, November 18–December 16, from 5:00–7:00 PM. *Register by November 10*

KIDS SPA SCIENCE *Ages 7+ \$60*

If your child is curious about making their own skin and body products this is the class for them! Once a month November through March, we will spend our time creating fun soaps, body sprays, lip glosses, bath bombs and learning the science behind how they work. From fun fragrances to bright bold colors, each child will have complete control of their works!

SPORTS PLAY BY KIDOKINETICS *Ages 1-6 \$72*

Jump, sprint, throw, kick, and play! This exciting multi-sport class introduces children to over 30 dynamic sports and activities—each designed to build essential skills, boost gross motor development, and spark a love for movement. Through guided play and age-appropriate challenges, kids gain confidence as they discover new ways to move their bodies, work as a team, and celebrate personal progress.

Wednesdays, November 5–26, from 4:00–5:00 PM (1-3 years old) and 5:00–6:00 PM (4-6 years old). *Register by October 28*

BEGINNER/INTERMEDIATE MAT PILATES *Ages 18+ \$30*

Join us for a refreshing and energizing mat Pilates class designed for all levels, especially beginners and those with some Pilates experience. Taught by Rhea Parekh, this class focuses on core strength, flexibility, and mindful movement all in a supportive, community-driven environment. Our goal is to make wellness reachable for everyone. Mats provided. You're welcome to bring your own if you prefer!

Wednesdays, November 5–19, from 6:30 PM–7:15 PM. *Register by October 28*

MARTIAL ARTS *Ages 8+ \$70*

Join Jim Douglas, 8th degree black belt and Master Instructor. Learn a traditional martial art that stresses self-defense, physical fitness, self-control and discipline. This is full martial arts incorporating principles from karate, hap ki do, tae kwon do and kempo. The program is for ages 8+ and the techniques taught are adaptable to any age or physical level. Program for Beginners or Advanced. This is a year-round program, and you may join anytime. *Registration Deadline is October 29*



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www.urbandale.org

HAVE the conversation

"We want to talk to the kids first..."

As we meet with folks to address their funeral prearrangements, they often mention that a conversation with their children is something they want to have first, before making any final decisions. That is certainly understandable and something that we encourage. Sometimes finding that "right time" or finding that opportunity when everyone is together can be a challenge.

With-that-said, the holidays are a time that bring families together, and that can be the ideal setting to have that important conversation with everyone. That doesn't mean you are going to bring up this topic as you sit down to the holiday meal, but there can be times around the holidays when people are together that can provide the right moment and setting to broach this topic.

You are doing this because you love your family and because you care about what will be important to them. You ultimately want to make things easier for them. As we head into that time of year, make it a priority to have this important conversation. You will be glad you did. ■

Information provided by Sarah Masteller, Advanced Planning Counselor, Hamilton's Southtown Funeral Home, 5400 S.W. Ninth St., Des Moines, 515-697-3679.



DANCE party, authors and puzzles

Haunted Iowa Presented By Iowa Psychic Bureau

Join us for an evening with Stefanie Nelson, paranormal investigator and founder of Iowa Psychic Bureau on Tuesday, Oct. 21 at 6 p.m. Stefanie will cover the lore and history of ghosts in Iowa, demonstrate and explain the science and theories behind paranormal equipment and ghost hunting, and discuss the types of mediums and psychics.

Trunk or Treat Dance Party. You don't want to miss a rockin' good time at the library on Thursday, Oct. 23 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. We will have popular cardboard stand-up figures for photo ops and a dance party with bubbles, glow sticks and monstrously good tunes. Stop by after you visit the Urbandale Police Department's Trunk or Treat.

Local Author Expo. The library is hosting its first Local Author Expo on Saturday, Nov. 1 from 1-3 p.m. Meet Iowa authors and browse available books for sale. Authors that you can expect to see include Kelsey Bigelow (poetry), Edie Goodwin (Christian Fiction), Thomas Graves (Literary/Historical Fiction), Chris Guhl (Young Adult/Adult Fiction), Joseph LeValley (Mystery/Thriller), Lacy Rose (Romance), Victor Santos (Children), Michelle Sprout Murray (Nonfiction-Iowa), Katy Swalwell (Nonfiction-Adult/Children), Brooke Van Sickle (Nonfiction-Writing) and Renee Welk (Nonfiction-Self-Help).

November Puzzle Competition. Get your team ready for the return of our puzzle competition in November, with a bonus challenge — complete a 1,000-piece puzzle for an additional prize. The two teams with the fastest times for the 500- and 1,000-piece puzzles will win a prize, plus everyone who participates will be entered in a drawing.

DesMoiNTRAK Model Train Display. Check out DesMoiNTRAK's model trains on display in the library meeting rooms on Saturday, Nov. 8 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, Nov. 9 from 12:30-4 p.m. New this year: There will be a layout for kids to operate.

Holiday Lights Recycling. The library is pleased to partner with Metro Waste Authority for the fifth year in a row by offering a collection box for disposing of any holiday lights you find as you decorate for the holidays. The box will be available from Nov. 10 through Jan. 30 during library hours.

Adventure Pass-Blue Zoo. The Blue Zoo in West Des Moines is offering two free child admissions with the purchase of one regular-priced adult admission. Cardholders must present a valid photo ID and printed pass before admission into the venue is allowed. ■

Urbandale Public Library

3520 86th St., Urbandale
515-278-3945
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.

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HIDDEN gem of caregiving: adult day services

Caring for a loved one can certainly be rewarding, but balancing work, household responsibilities, and your own well-being can feel overwhelming. The good news: Resources are readily available in the form of adult day services, which can provide meaningful enrichment during the day while easing the stress of caregiving.



What are adult day services? Adult day services offer daytime support and engagement for adults who may need help with daily activities, face safety risks when left alone, or simply benefit from social interaction. Participants can attend daily or just a few times a week. While many participants live with dementia, a memory-challenge diagnosis is not required.

Safety and peace of mind. Safety is a cornerstone of adult day programs. Participants

thrive in secure environments with professional oversight, while families gain confidence knowing their loved one is supported.

One caregiver shared that she found relief when her husband, who was living with dementia, began attending an adult day program. At home, he had begun leaving the stove on and water running. "I was trying to work from home to make sure he was safe, but I couldn't get anything done. Adult day was a godsend. I finally felt like I could stop worrying 24/7."

More than "something to do."

Programming is designed to nourish body, mind and spirit through:

- Social activities that reduce isolation
- Nutritious meals and snacks
- Physical and cognitive activities that promote engagement
- Safe spaces where participants can thrive, even with chronic conditions

Why families choose adult day services.

Although adult day services can make a

tremendous difference, many families are unaware they exist. Too often, the services remain a best-kept secret until caregiving stress reaches a breaking point.

Benefits extend to both participants and caregivers. Participants enjoy engagement, connection, and better nutrition. Caregivers experience reduced stress, more time for self-care, and confidence that their loved one is thriving.

Take the first step. If you're balancing caregiving and searching for peace of mind, consider exploring adult day services in your area. These programs provide the support your loved one deserves — and the breathing room you need to be at your best. ■

Aaron Wheeler is Vice President of Home and Community-Based Services for WesleyLife, which provides health and well-being services for older adults — including adult day services in Des Moines and Newton. To learn more, visit wesleylife.org.

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HONORING heroes

Dreams Across America brings wreaths to veterans' graves

"To be killed in war is not the worst that can happen. To be lost is not the worst that can happen... to be forgotten is the worst." — Pierre Claeysens (1909-2003)



Rob Stark served four tours of duty for the Army: Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Now retired from active duty, Rob is the commander of the Urbandale American Legion Post 663.

Stark often gets the traditional "Thank you for your service" when people hear of his time served. While he is appreciative of this recognition, one day he got to thinking, "Who recognizes the great service of our veterans who are no longer living?" After some investigation, he came across a national program called "Wreaths Across America."

The goal is simple yet profound: to place wreaths on each veteran's grave during the holiday season.

"These are not artificial decorations. They're real wreaths, hand-crafted in Maine and adorned with red ribbons," Stark says.

While Van Meter's Veterans Cemetery is a familiar site for such tributes, community cemeteries, like Urbandale's McDivitt Grove, offer a



Ryan Mehalovich of Edward Jones presents the Neighbor Spotlight certificate to Rob Stark.

more intimate setting where each wreath stands as a symbol of gratitude. There are a total of 116 veterans interred at McDivitt, Stark says.

"Those veterans gave their time to this country. We want to make sure that those of us who are living honor their service by placing a wreath on their grave," he says.

Though Wreaths Across America is a national initiative, local chapters like Urbandale's American Legion Post 663 and VFW Post 9668 are essential to its success.

"Dennis Appelhons is the commander for the Urbandale/Johnston VFW Post 9668. He has guided our Urbandale American Legion Post 663 to become a Sponsor Organization for Wreaths Across America. That is significant, because both our posts now are ensuring that McDivitt Grove Cemetery will have wreaths on all veterans' graves before and after Christmas. I most genuinely and certainly share this recognition with Dennis, his membership and our American Legion membership."

This holiday season, let the wreaths speak for us — of honor, memory and enduring gratitude.

As Commander Stark says, "Do it right now while you're thinking about it and while you're motivated." ■

Wreaths Across America

Cost per wreath: \$17

Bonus: For every seven wreaths ordered, two are provided free

Deadline to order: Nov. 28

How to donate: Visit www.wreathscrossamerica.org/IA0085



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Do you know a neighbor who deserves recognition?

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PURPOSE determines perspective

Traveling across I-80 on the south side of Chicago this past summer elevated my concept of a traffic jam to new heights. I remained uncharacteristically upbeat and refrained from any outward expressions of impatience. I had recently been reminded that a Godly purpose should determine perspective, and I was attempting to let it govern my reaction.

In Philippians chapter one, Paul wrote from jail where his ministry was restricted while his antagonists were “preaching Christ...out of selfish ambition” (1:15) hoping to “...cause him distress in his imprisonment” (1:17). Even in these disheartening circumstances, the apostle declared, “Only that in every way...Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice...” (1:18).

Paul didn’t despair that his ministry platform was confined to Roman soldiers, other prisoners and visitors, but celebrated that, “my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel” (1:12).

Believers in Christ may lament that our social media influence, church ministry and personal witness feel less impactful compared to others who also proclaim the necessity of personally turning from sin and trusting in Christ’s death and resurrection to receive forgiveness and eternal life (Romans 3:23; 6:23; 5:8; 10:9-10).

Christ followers often forget that our perspective in every circumstance leads to actions that either draw people to or drive them away from Christ. Our reaction to ministry limitations and spiritual “competition,” traffic jams, a fussy baby, an irresponsible teenager, work pressure, or relational disappointment, can steal our joy, turn us into jerks, or point people to Jesus.

The secret to Paul’s spiritually superior perspective amid adversity was the purpose for which he lived. “...that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body...” (Philippians 1:20). The positive attitude which governed Paul’s actions was determined by one overarching passion — to exalt Christ in every situation.

When exalting Christ is our constant goal then, like Paul, regardless of our circumstances, we choose a response that brings Him glory.

When the ministry of other Christ followers is fruitful, we rejoice. When a store clerk makes a mistake, we show kindness. When our children mess up, we demonstrate patience. When our illness persists, we joyfully persevere.

“Everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms — to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances...” (Viktor Frankl, Holocaust Survivor).

Our purpose of exalting Christ produces a positive perspective, resulting in practices that benefit others and glorify Him. ■



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

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EVENTS IN THE AREA

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

Upcoming in Urbandale Living magazine:

Veterans Salute: Help us salute local veterans in our November issue. Send us a photo of your veteran along with name, town of residence, rank, military branch, enlistment dates and what they would like others to know about serving their country. Please email to: Tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com.

Urbandale High School Fall Play "The Bosses' Valet"

Friday, Nov. 7, 7 p.m.; Saturday, Nov. 8, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Sunday, Nov. 9, 2 p.m.

Urbandale High School

Enjoy the Urbandale High School production of "The Bosses' Valet," an adaptation of "The Servant of Two Masters" set in 1920s New York. Tickets can be purchased at www.j-hawks.com/sports/drama/2025-2026/fall-play-preview. In addition to the performances, a food and necessities drive will be held for the Urbandale Food Pantry during show days.

Urbandale Historical Society Programs

Urbandale Public Library, 3520 86th St., Urbandale

- Nov. 9, 2 p.m. History of Mercy Medical Center
- Dec. 14, 2 p.m. Christmas open House at Olmsted/Urban House
- Jan. 11, 2 p.m. Living History Farm and The Flynns by Elizabeth Keest Sedrel
- Feb. 8, 2 p.m. History of the Urbandale Golf and Country Club by Todd Carberry
- March 8, 2 p.m. Fraud and Courage with Urbandale's Terry Rich
- April 12, 2 p.m. The Story of Merle Hay Mall with Liz Holland

Halloween Pumpkin Decorating

Thursday, Oct. 30, 6-7 p.m.

Giovannetti Shelter, Walker Johnson Park, 8900 Douglas Ave., Urbandale

Ages 6-10, enjoy decorating a pumpkin for this spooky holiday. Pumpkins and paint supplies will be provided. You will be able to take your pumpkin home afterwards to show the neighborhood. Register by Thursday, Oct. 23. Register online at <https://urbandale.activityreg.com/selectActivity?nLeaguesId=5410>.



Halloween - Trick or Treat

Friday, Oct. 31, 6-8 p.m.

Urbandale celebrates Beggars' Night on Oct. 31.

Join the Mural Selfie Contest

American Legion Post 663, 6805 Douglas Ave., Urbandale

Celebrate Urbandale with a fun selfie contest. Visit the mural at American Legion Post 663 and snap a selfie. Share the post on Facebook or Instagram. Get creative and show off your Urbandale pride. One lucky winner will win an Urbandale-themed prize basket with a fanny pack, iPhone case, pickleball set, and T-shirt. Deadline is Friday, Oct. 31. View the full rules and learn more at <https://events.urbandale.org/mural/>. ■



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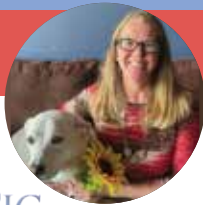
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WELLNESS

By Dr. Jody England

WHY choose nutritional wellness?

To be well, it is important to stay active and strong throughout your lifetime. When an organ is depleted of its nutrients, you are more likely to have tight muscles, which can lead to injuries or prolonged soreness. Targeting nutritional deficiencies can help. Many of our patients and their doctors have commented how fast their recoveries have been on wellness programs and how much better their endurance is. We have witnessed a severe asthmatic become a top cross-country runner.



Maybe it is a tight neck while sitting at the computer at work or a stiff neck that you woke up with. These symptoms are often poor drainage issues and can be a result of nutritional depletions.

Another patient was under chiropractic care following a car accident. Her body was not healing properly, and, after a prolonged period of time, she continued to experience a lot of shoulder and neck tension. In just a few visits on a nutrition program, the patient's muscles relaxed, and she was feeling normal. She continued her wellness journey to assist other issues she had no idea nutrition could affect. Nutritional biofeedback testing fills the gaps. ■

Information provided by Dr. Jody England, DC, Urbandale Chiropractic, 10437 Hickman Road, 515-278-4594, www.urbandalechiro.com.

HEALTH

By Annette Smith

JAW pain, ear pain, headaches

Do you wake up with jaw soreness, ear pain or frequent headaches that seem to come out of nowhere? Many people don't realize that issues with the jaw — known as TMJ dysfunction — can be a major contributor to headaches, dizziness, ear pain and even tinnitus (ringing in the ears). The temporomandibular joint (TMJ), located just in front of the ear, is closely connected to the neck and head. When this joint or its surrounding muscles are strained, the effects often extend well beyond the jaw itself.



Clenching or grinding your teeth, high stress levels, poor posture, or an uneven bite can overload the TMJ. This can trigger pain that radiates into the temples, cause tightness in the neck and shoulders, or lead to a feeling of fullness or ringing in the ears. Because the jaw, ear and cervical spine are interconnected, imbalances in one area often create symptoms in another.

The encouraging news is that relief is possible. Physical therapy offers targeted exercises, gentle hands-on techniques, and education to restore proper movement and reduce strain. By addressing the root cause instead of only managing symptoms, many people find lasting improvement in headaches, ear pain, and tinnitus — leading to better comfort and quality of life. ■

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



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CREAMY tomato soup is rich with sun-ripened flavor

There is something special about cooking with ingredients grown from your own backyard. Recently, I was watching our grandson at my daughter and son-in-law's house. He and I ventured outside to check on their garden and discovered a bumper crop of tomatoes.



Since the weather was cool, I decided that a batch of tomato soup for dinner would serve the harvest well. Our grandson, just 8 months old, is already a curious observer in the kitchen. He keeps me company from his high chair, happily armed with a dozen measuring cups to toss and a few snacks to keep him content. This creamy tomato soup, made with an abundance of fresh-picked tomatoes and a blend of herbs, is rich with sun-ripened flavor. Paired with a golden, melty grilled cheese on homemade sourdough, it was the perfect fall dinner — simple, cozy and made even sweeter by sharing it together with my grandson. ■

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

Creamy tomato soup

Total time: 45 minutes

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 3-4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive or avocado oil
- 2 pounds fresh tomatoes (about 6 large), blanched, skins off and chopped
- 2 cups chicken broth (low sodium preferred)
- 1/3 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1/2 -3/4 cup heavy (whipping) cream
- 2 tablespoons honey
- Salt and pepper, basil, oregano — more of everything than you think
- Pinch of rosemary
- Fresh basil or parsley (optional, for garnish)

Directions

- Heat oil over medium heat. Add onion and sauté for about 5 minutes until soft.
- Add garlic and cook all for 2 more minutes.
- Add tomatoes and cook for 10 minutes.



- Add chicken broth and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes, uncovered. Stir occasionally.
- Blend until smooth by using an immersion blender and scooping the mixture into a traditional blender. Return soup to the pan.
- Add whipping cream and honey and stir. Season with salt, pepper, basil, oregano and other herbs of choice.
- Simmer for 5 more minutes.
- Serve immediately. Garnish with fresh basil or parsley. This pairs well with a grilled cheese sandwich on sourdough bread. Enjoy!

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The Urbandale Chamber held a ribbon cutting for the Urbandale Food Pantry on Sept. 12.



Keith Riden, Jonathan Colby Ben Buenzow at Sample Urbandale held at Holiday Inn & Suites Northwest on Sept. 25.



Dustin Hogan Steve Weede at Sample Urbandale held at Holiday Inn & Suites Northwest on Sept. 25.



Joan Ellis and Tanya Lange at Sample Urbandale held at Holiday Inn & Suites Northwest on Sept. 25.



Clint Dudley and Katie Wold at Sample Urbandale held at Holiday Inn & Suites Northwest on Sept. 25.



Michael Russell, Mary Russell and David Russell at Sample Urbandale held at Holiday Inn & Suites Northwest on Sept. 25.



Allan Graham and Gina Graham at Sample Urbandale held at Holiday Inn & Suites Northwest on Sept. 25.



Susan Bonnicksen and Dave Mable at Sample Urbandale held at Holiday Inn & Suites Northwest on Sept. 25.



Brad Harbert and Madeilline Preston at Sample Urbandale held at Holiday Inn & Suites Northwest on Sept. 25.



Joe Hartzler and Rich Reese at Sample Urbandale held at Holiday Inn & Suites Northwest on Sept. 25.



Mary Knueven and Pat Knueven at Sample Urbandale held at Holiday Inn & Suites Northwest on Sept. 25.

OUT & ABOUT

RIBBON Cutting

The Urbandale Chamber held a ribbon cutting for Viva La Beauty & Serenity Massage on Sept. 8.



Mark Courter and Lisa Hanrahan



Tiffany Menke and Pennie Carroll



Anna Ito and Ashley Tape



Bernard de Premonville and Aaron Colyer



Jill Ellsworth, Mayor Bob Andeweg and Perla Islas



Karla Rangel and Sarah Henry



Dee Mable and Marsha Smothers



Caleb Vorpahl and Alex Alstott



Meg Knapper and David Reis



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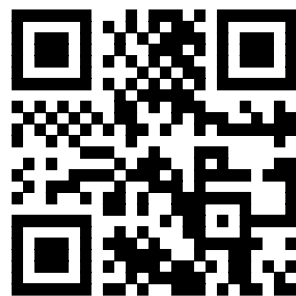
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