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ALTOONA

OCTOBER 2025

Living

Costume CREATIONS

Residents share how they
add their own touches to
Halloween garbs.

Meet Tara Lewis

EDUCATION

Creamy tomato soup

RECIPE

Laser tag, bracelets and Bop or Flop

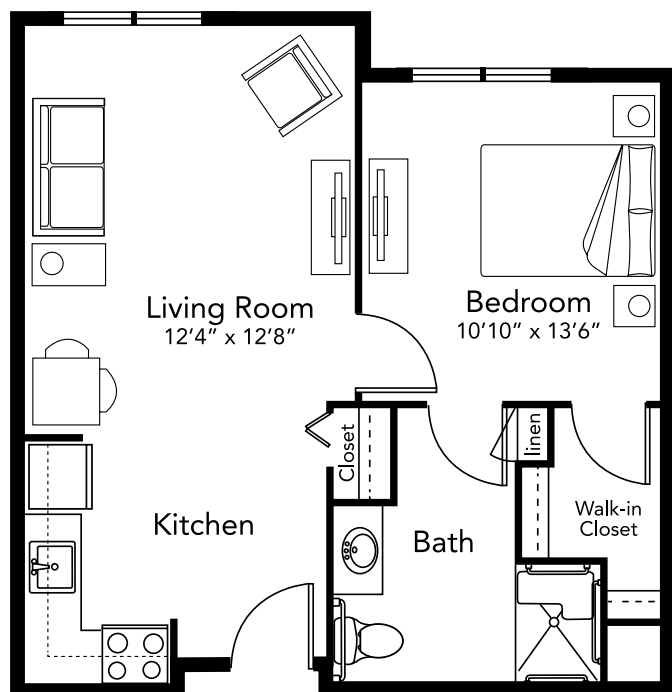
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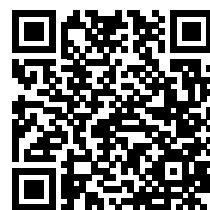
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WELCOME

HALLOWEEN is not just for kids

If you have not yet decided on a Halloween costume, you might want to hurry up. You can't wear that Elvis costume every year.

Yes, Halloween is near, and it's not just for kids. Most all of us have great memories of trick-or-treating with our siblings and friends, amassing a bag of candy we would struggle to carry.

Choosing a costume as a kid was not high pressure, as I simply wore whatever Mom had for me, which was usually a hand-me-down from my siblings. I really didn't care. As an adult, though, the pressure in choosing a Halloween costume intensified. I could no longer strap on a plastic mask and call it good.

Through the years, Jolene and I had some costume hits and some costume misses. The biggest miss was in our younger years when we dressed as mummies, wearing white long underwear tops and bottoms and covering each other with strips of white bed sheets. It seemed like a great idea — until we had to go to the bathroom.

Another year, we went with a group and dressed as the Gilligan's Island crew. Jolene and I were Mr. and Mrs. Howell. And, yes, I carried the teddy bear.

Speaking of bears, a few years later, we tried Goldilocks and the three bears with another couple. It didn't work. We looked like a little girl and three giant mice.

Jolene and I also did stunts as the farmer and the cow, the hunter and the deer, the Lone Ranger and Tonto, and Farrah Fawcett and Michael Jackson.

The best costumes we ever had, though, were when we dressed as the couple that was throwing the party. We pulled that one off twice, to the dismay of the hosts.

I encourage you to get into the Halloween spirit this year. Attend a costume party or event, or just dress up and entertain the kids who are trick-or-treating. And, if you struggle to come up with a costume, well, there is always Elvis.

Happy Halloween, and thanks for reading. ■

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CITYVIEW SENIORVIEW *IOWA Living*

Costume CREATIONS

Residents share how they
add their own touches to
Halloween garbs.

By Sean Dengler

When it comes to Halloween, some people like to pull out all the stops. They turn their yards into haunted or cartoon landscapes. They carve pumpkins, bob for apples, and offer the best treats to their trick-or-treaters. And, they put their energy and holiday spirit into making sure their costumes — or their kids' — make others “ooh” and “aah” ... and perhaps shudder.

Last year, Jessica Heitman's kids dressed as Taylor Swift and Hoppy Hopscotch from “Smiling Critters.”



One of Saide Zisoff's favorite costumes was the year her child was a firefighter complete with firetruck.

A growing tradition

For some people, Halloween is about the spookiness and candy. This holiday means much more to Saide Zisoff and her family.

"Our family is big into the DIY costumes around Halloween," Zisoff says. "We have actually made it a tradition, and we go all in as a family and create unique costumes. I would say our first costume was the crazy cat lady back in 2018 and we have since elevated from there."

Sadie and her husband, Eric, and kids — Ailah, Violet and Luther — have not looked back.

"In 2019, we did Spanish-themed family costumes, including a walking taco, taco bus and avocado with the pit when I was expecting our second child," she says.

While 2020 threw everyone's world for a loop, the Zisoffs picked up right where they left off in 2021.

"COVID, of course, made things a little bit trickier, but then we jumped back in and did an 'under the sea' theme in 2021," Zisoff says. "This one was one of our favorites as my husband built an entire shark cage out of PVC piping, and I went to work on the apparel: a shark costume made out of a hooded sweatshirt, a sea turtle out of mattress foam and puffy paint and a jellyfish complete with Dollar Tree bowls, fairy lights and tablecloth. Our daughter went as the scuba diver in the tank. We even put wheels on the cage so we could push it around the neighborhood, Night Eyes and other fun places to celebrate. We actually took first place in a costume contest for this one."

As the children have grown older, the tradition continues to evolve, Zisoff says.



Saide Zisoff's daughter dressed as the ballerina in a music box.



Saide Zisoff's daughter dressed as a rider on a carousel horse.

"Then in 2022, we had our third child, and this year we decided each child could pick their own special costume. My son was Mr. Peanut, and my daughters were a carousel horse and a Starbucks pumpkin spice latte. These were probably my most favorite individual creations."

Each year presents a new opportunity to build upon their past success.

"However, each year we try to get a little more creative and think outside the box. Literally," Zisoff says. "The last two years, our costumes have been so big that we have had to take two cars to Halloween events. This included a mobile fire truck where the box fit over our stroller wagon; a musical jewelry box where my daughter was the spinning ballerina complete with the turnkey; and my oldest daughter was Caitlin Clark on a sports trading card. There was also a costume where my son was Tony the Tiger jumping out of the Frosted Flakes cereal box."

There might be a fair amount of work that goes into this tradition, but it is worth it, she says.

"It's a family project from start to finish. It's something that we can do together," Zisoff says. "It brings us together. We share ideas, what everybody wants. Then my husband and I get into it. It's just something fun that we enjoy and can do together. It also teaches the kids how to take an idea, put it into action, make a plan, and then they get to see the end result."

Their costumes have made an impact on their community.

"It has become a yearly tradition for us, as many of our friends and family look forward to seeing our latest creations," Zisoff says. "The



Saide Zisoff and her family go all out for Halloween. One year, they dressed in a Mexican theme.

Halloween spirit really drives the creativity, and, sometimes, we get to work two or three months ahead of the holiday. It's one of our favorite times of the year that we look forward to. We love taking an idea, creating a plan and bringing it to life. It's a great opportunity to bring us together as a family and create some fun childhood memories for my kids."

This year's Halloween will be no different.

"This year, we have a few surprises up our sleeve, and the kids are super excited to share them on Halloween."

Letting the creativity flow

Creating costumes as a family started for Jessica Heitman with her firstborn.

"It all started when I had my first daughter, and she is 11," she says. "She would've been about 10 months old for her first Halloween. I just saw something online, and I decided that I wanted to try my hand at it. Her first costume was a hand-sewn penguin costume, made out of fleece. My second daughter, who is 8 ... wore the same costume for her first Halloween."

The years of creating costumes for her daughters, Zoey and Quinn, have led to some memorable examples. One of her favorites was her daughter's costume three years ago.

"She wanted to be a cicada," Heitman says. "That same year, my oldest, was a jellyfish."

Both costumes took a little creativity.

"We made the jellyfish out of a clear umbrella, and it lit up. It was pretty cool," Heitman says. "The cicada costume was more complicated."

"She loves cicadas, and it's just been kind of this running joke," Heitman says. "When she said that's what she was going to be for Halloween, I was kind of stumped."

To start with, Heitman found a pre-made beetle costume.

"I used that as the base because it already had the arms," she says. "That saved me a step in having to create those myself. I did end up ordering a pair of wings off of Amazon. For the shell, I used really thin crafting foam and poster board. I cut out the shapes that I wanted in brown, green and a little bit of black. For the antenna, we used the head from the original beetle costume that we had gotten. It already had the eyes on there."

The end result was worth the work, she says.

"It was a really big hit."

In addition, the costume was "nice and comfy. She just used leggings for the pants. It was almost like a dress, but the dress was made out of paper."

Making these unique costumes is a passion, Heitman says.

"I really like the crafting aspect of it," she says. "When the girls got a little bit older, it became a way to involve them and let them creatively come up with something that they typically wouldn't see in the store."

Heitman encourages others to try their hand at making their own costumes.

"It's just a lot of fun. It's exciting to see the kids get into it and be so excited to wear



Jessica Heitman's costumes had a "Schitt's Creek" theme one year.



Both of Jessica Heitman's girls, Zoey and Quinn, in the costumes that started it all.

something that they created as opposed to just saw in a magazine," she says, "I love getting the compliments and the attention. It's a lot of fun for me to see all my hard work pay off."

The entire family get involved, including her husband, Cole. They have made family costumes like the "Bluey" family, "Schitt's Creek" and "Alice in Wonderland."

"I encourage everybody to do it," Heitman says. "We have so much fun every year. We start thinking about what we are going to



Jessica Heitman made unique Cicada and Jellyfish costumes.

do, probably the beginning of September. It's definitely not a quick thing. It wouldn't be a last-minute thing that I would suggest doing."

But the effort is worth it, she says.

"If you have the time and the energy and the talent, it is so much fun. Halloween is just fun in general, but this kind of elevates everything and makes it a little more special." ■



OCTOBER 2025

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2025 TRICK OR TREAT NIGHT

Don't forget, this year trick or treat night will be on Friday October 31st from 6-8pm! Residents who wish to participate in trick or treating should turn their outdoor lights on between the hours of 6-8 p.m. to signal that children can stop by. Those who do not wish to participate should turn outdoor "porch lights" off between the hours of 6-8 p.m.

Finally, as little ghouls and goblins are out and about on the 31st, please ensure you are being extra watchful, especially if you are traveling around town during trick or treat hours. Have a safe, and happy Halloween!



FALL PREP: SIMPLE STEPS TO PROTECT WATER QUALITY THIS SEASON

As leaves begin to fall and temperatures drop, now is the perfect time to prepare your property for winter while protecting local water quality. A few simple maintenance tasks this fall can prevent downstream problems and keep pollutants out of our streams and rivers. These seasonal preparations also help ensure that winter storms won't cause damage around your home.

Start by keeping leaves and debris out of storm drains and off streets where they can clog drainage systems or wash into waterways. Clean your gutters and downspouts to ensure proper drainage and prevent ice dams that can cause water damage. If you have rain barrels, drain them completely and disconnect them from downspouts to prevent freezing and cracking. Take time to inspect your yard for bare spots or eroded areas that might need reseeding before winter weather arrives.



**Keep storm
drains cleared!**

Don't forget about your rain gardens and other stormwater features. Remove any debris that might block drainage, but consider leaving some plant material standing through winter to provide habitat for beneficial insects and birds. If you typically fertilize in fall, test your soil first - you may need less than you think, and excess fertilizer can wash away during winter thaws. These straightforward fall tasks not only prepare your property for winter weather but also help protect the water quality in your neighborhood streams and rivers. A little preparation now goes a long way toward preventing problems when spring arrives.

FALL YARD WORK

Please remember as you clean up your yards this fall, that you should not be pushing leaves and other yard waste into streets and storm sewers. Yard waste can be collected and placed in Metro Waste Compost It! Bags or in Compost It! Yard carts. Yard waste collection season ends on November 26. For more details, visit www.mwatoday.com.

NEW COMMUNICATION TOOL

The city has started to use a new communication technology tool to give residents a way to track news and information on departments and projects that are most important to them. Residents can sign up by providing their email address in the box that pops up on the city's website, www.altoona-iowa.com

SIGN UP



The **ONLY** poll mailed to residential households. **VOTE NOW!**

IT'S BACK!

Who will be voted favorite in Eastern Polk County?

We all have our favorite local people, places and things. And now it's time to share your choices and honor those who deserve the recognition.



Make your voice be heard and cast your votes in the 2025 Eastern Polk County Residents' Choice Poll. This contest is being hosted by Iowa Living magazines, and the results will publish January Altoona and Bondurant editions. You can vote in one or every category, or anywhere in between.

HURRY! POLL CLOSES DEC. 5, 2025

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

SCAN HERE TO
VOTE TODAY!



FOOD AND DRINK

- Restaurant
- Restaurant for Breakfast
- Restaurant for Lunch
- Restaurant for Dinner
- Restaurant for Dessert
- Place for Ice Cream
- Pizza Establishment
- Bar
- Coffee Shop
- Catering Company
- Server/Bartender

AUTOMOTIVE

- Auto Service
- Auto Body Shop
- Car Dealership

COMMUNITY

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

SHOPPING

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

ENTERTAINMENT

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

HEALTH/BEAUTY

- Hair Salon
- Physicians Clinic
- Dental Office
- Orthodontist Office
- Mental Health Service
- Chiropractic Office
- Audiologist/Hearing Clinic
- Vision Care
- Health Club or Gym
- Alternative Health Care

HEALTH/BEAUTY

- Pharmacy
- Physical Therapy
- Dance Studio
- Gymnastics/Tumbling Studio

OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

- Financial Planner
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- Place for Guests to Stay
- Home Builder
- Outdoor Lawn Equipment Store
- Pest Control
- General Contractor/Remodeling



Referendum 2025 VOTE

Tuesday, November 4

On November 4, 2025, Southeast Polk Community School District voters will see a measure on the election ballot asking whether the District may issue \$51 million in general obligation bonds.

KEY REFERENDUM POINTS

- ❖ Provides a dedicated funding source to support long-term facility improvements
- ❖ Delivers multiple benefits for students, including safe, modern, and supportive learning spaces
- ❖ No increase to the District's property tax levy rate
- ❖ Requires 60% vote approval to pass

KEY PROJECTS IN THE PLAN

- ❖ Build, furnish, and equip a new elementary school
 - Including district-wide dedicated preschool and transitional kindergarten classrooms to give kids a strong start
- ❖ Upgrade playgrounds at all PK-5 Schools
 - Focus on safety and accessibility improvements for all students
- ❖ Renovate the Junior High (grades 8-9)
 - Relocate the main office to the building entrance to improve safety and accessibility
 - Expand the common areas to better serve students



**Vote
Nov. 4**

  Follow SEPSchools on Facebook & Instagram



LEARN MORE AT southeastpolk.org/2025-referendum-vote



A PASSION for campers

Residents enjoy RV vacations.

Having an RV means more than only having a place to stay for Jill Villalobos.

"We enjoy vacationing with our RV for many reasons," she says. "Primarily being the great community of people we meet all across the country."

Jill and her husband, Leo, also enjoy staying at places like Latitudes RV Resort in Woodward while in the comfort of their camper.

"We prefer RV'ing to tents or hotels, as the RV is like our own condo on wheels," Jill says. "Instant hot water showers, our own very comfortable bed, and our own kitchen and living room complete with a fireplace. Plus, we get to take our two Pomeranians with us."

Jill also enjoys other aspects of the RV.

"The features we love in our RV are the quality of craftsmanship, the layout, our hot water showers, and the fireplace, along with the panoramic windows along the back that give us the chance to have beautiful views."

Combine comfort, features and the ability to go anywhere, and this RV has helped create wonderful memories.

"We've made a ton of memories," Jill says. "From visiting Fort Wilderness at Walt Disney World, to spending most of a winter in Gulf Shores Alabama, to a rally in northwest Georgia, as well as the great memories we've made camping locally with great friends."

When it comes down to other benefits and drawbacks, Jill's answer is easy.

"The benefits are many: the features we've mentioned, the ability to take our own home with us wherever we want to go. We haven't found any drawbacks yet."

Jill and Leo are thankful for those who started them down the path of RV life.

"We are grateful to the friends who introduced us to RV life and would really recommend it."

Traveling every year

While Greg is retired from teaching, and Tracy still teaches, the Hollands like to use their 28-foot travel trailer for a simple reason.

"We like to be in the outdoors," Greg notes. "We don't want to be in a motel and have to drive to be in the woods or be by the water. We like being out in the wildlife as much as we can in a campground."

"Another reason we chose to travel and camp versus maybe a summer cabin on like Clear Lake is, when you travel, you get to see new places and different adventures," he adds. "You don't get that with a summer



Jill and Leo Villalobos enjoy the benefits of their camper, including being able to take their dogs along on trips.



Greg and Tracy Holland enjoy traveling in their RV especially because they enjoy seeing the national parks and their beauty.



cabin at the same location."

Having an RV provides the Hollands with a chance to be up close to animals.

"I still want to be out close to where the action is," Greg says. "We've camped out West, and we've had buffalo walk through the campground."

For the Hollands, it is more affordable and logical to stay in an RV when compared to tents or a hotel.

"We treat it like a house on wheels," Tracy says. "We use dishes, we use everything in our RV. Our bathrooms, our showers, our oven. Everything has a purpose in the RV, and we use it."

For the Hollands, their RV has given them the chance to visit more than 30 national parks including their longest trip, three and a half weeks, to Yosemite in California, which also included Sequoia, King's Canyon, Canyonlands, Bryce Canyon and Zion. During these trips, they also enjoy the campgrounds.

"We found that the people that are camping there that we don't even know are really friendly and nice," Greg says. "They are always willing to share information and tips and everything. It's a real nice community to be around."

When it comes to the downsides of the RV, it can be tough when your RV is like a house.

"Things are going to break," Tracy says. "There's always something to fix with a house. My dad's favorite saying is, 'Camping is fun when everything works.'"

Greg adds, "You have to do the maintenance and stuff. That costs money, but it gives you some peace of mind."

The RV also provides wonderful opportunities to enjoy nature.

"The campfires seem to take on a more mystic experience when it is out in the wild versus your backyard," Greg says. "The sounds, the colors of the fire, the moon and stars are brighter."

The RV also provides a place of gatherings.

"It's nice to have my family," Tracy says. "We camp a lot of times in the spring and the fall with my parents and my aunt and uncle. Then our children will also come out sometimes. It's nice to be able to spend time with my family." ■

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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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HOW TO start saving for college

College is one of the most significant financial commitments individuals face today. No matter the school, the costs, including tuition, room and board, books, and more, can add up quickly.



Whether you're planning for yourself or thinking ahead for your kids or other relatives, the idea of paying for college can feel overwhelming. The good news is that, with a little planning, you can take meaningful steps now to prepare. Here are some practical tips to help you start a college savings plan.

Set a savings goal

Having a clear goal can make saving feel more manageable. Start by asking yourself:

What portion of the cost will be covered by a parent or relative versus the student?

Are you expecting supporting scholarships?

How much time do you have to save?

Will student loans be part of your plan?

Answering these questions can help estimate how much you'll need to save and guide your decision on which savings tools to use.

Explore college savings account options

There are several types of accounts designed to help save for education. Here are two popular options:

- **529 College Savings Plan:** A 529 plan is a tax-advantaged investment account designed specifically for education expenses. Sponsored by states or educational institutions, these plans allow your savings to grow tax-free when used for qualified expenses. In Iowa, you can open a 529 account with as little as \$25 and contribute up to \$420,000 per beneficiary.

- **Roth IRA:** While typically used for retirement, a Roth IRA can also be used to pay for qualified education expenses. Contributions are made with after-tax dollars, and withdrawals for education (after five years) are tax- and penalty-free. This can be a flexible option if you're balancing retirement and education savings.

Other options include high-yield savings accounts or certificates of deposit (CDs), which can help grow existing funds with minimal risk. A financial advisor can help you choose the best fit for your goals.

Make it part of your budget

One of the most effective ways to build any savings is to automate it. Consider setting up a recurring monthly transfer into your chosen savings account — just like you would for a vacation, home or retirement fund. Even small contributions can add up significantly over time, especially when paired with the right investment strategy.

With a clear goal, the right account, and a consistent savings habit, you can make meaningful progress toward funding future education. Start early, stay consistent and don't hesitate to ask a financial expert for guidance. ■

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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ALTOONA Public Library news



ADULT PROGRAMMING – AGES 18+

Laser Tag at the Library, Friday, Nov. 7 at 6 p.m.

Join us for a laser tag battle. Once the library has closed for the day, we'll spread out for an after-hours battle in the stacks. All supplies will be provided. Be sure to wear comfortable clothes and shoes. Registration required.

Sheep to Sweater: Knitting, Thursday, Nov. 13 at 6 p.m.

Join us for the final part of the three-part Fiber Arts series about what it takes to go from raw materials to finished project. This month, we're looking at the art of knitting, the history behind it, and what it takes to turn yarn into a finished, wearable garment — from Sheep to Sweater! Registration required.

Fiber Swap, Saturday, Nov. 15 at 1 p.m.

Bring in your extra knitting, crochet, embroidery, or other fiber supplies to swap them for something new. Drop off items to donate during regular library hours Nov. 7-14 to receive a voucher. The voucher gets you into the swap during the first hour to shop for some new-to-you supplies. No registration required.

Altoona Public Library

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

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING

Toddler Time, Thursdays from 10-11 a.m.

Join us for a half-hour of books, rhymes and music perfect for your little ones, followed by a half-hour of free play time. Ages 5 and younger. No registration required.

Slime Time, Wednesday, Nov. 5 from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Stop by the library to mix up some slime. We will have lots of add-ins to make your ooey gooey creation one of a kind. Grades K-6. No registration required.

Paracord Bracelets, Wednesday, Nov. 19 from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Join us to learn how to make a paracord survival bracelet. Make one for yourself and one for a friend. Grades 4-6. Registration required.

TEEN PROGRAMMING – GRADES 6-12

Bop or Flop? 1990s, Monday, Nov. 3, from 6-7 p.m.

1990s fashion has returned, but does the music of the 90s still hold up? Come listen to the top tunes of the decade and judge for yourself: Are these still a bop or actually a total flop? No registration required.

Handmade Hangout, Monday, Nov. 10, from 6-7 p.m.

Working on a crochet project? Dabbling in drawing? Bring your project and hang out with other creative friends. We'll also have make and take kits available to try different types of projects. No registration required.

Teen Hangout, Fridays in November, from 3:30-4:30 p.m.

1990s fashion has made a return, but does the music of the 90s still hold up? Come listen to the top tunes of the decade and judge for yourself: Are these still a bop or actually a total flop? No registration required.

Holiday Hours

- Wednesday, Nov. 26: Open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- Thursday, Nov. 27, and Friday, Nov. 28: Closed

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

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MEET Tara Lewis

Writing stories and reading what they like helps students enjoy learning.



Tara Lewis teaches first grade at Clay Elementary.

Tara Lewis has a passion for teaching early reading. Working as a Montessori preschool teacher, kindergarten teacher and reading specialist, Lewis has built a foundation that has given her the confidence to teach first graders to read. Now, Lewis teaches at Clay Elementary School. Although Lewis was initially hired as a reading and math specialist at the Southeast Polk Community School District, when a classroom opened up, she transitioned into teaching first grade.

"The moment I stepped into Clay Elementary, it felt like home. The staff, students and families were all extremely welcoming. I also feel like the administration, instructional coaches and district coordinators all strive to do what is best for students. They are always willing to answer questions or help out when needed," Lewis says.

Lewis graduated from the University of Minnesota with an undergraduate degree in child psychology and a master's degree in elementary education before teaching kindergarten in Northfield, Minnesota. When her husband's career brought Lewis' family to Iowa, she took a few years off to spend time raising her three children. Lewis then spent 10 years teaching as a Montessori preschool teacher before returning to public education.

"I had heard amazing things about SEP. I had friends who had worked for the district and were very happy there," Lewis says.

Her students have enjoyed learning about traditions, cultures, maps, sign language, animal adaptations and the sun, moon and stars. Lewis strives to encourage her students to be curious about the world and works to help her students feel confident about reading. For example, each student in Lewis' classroom has a book bag full of books they have chosen to read.

"They know their target is to find books that they love and can read. By giving them the power to choose what they read, they end up spending more focused time reading," Lewis says.

She also provides her students time to write about stories they are interested in. Her hope is that she has instilled her students with a lifelong passion for learning.

"The best reward is witnessing students who are not reading at the beginning of the year who end up reading with excitement by the end of the year. I also like watching my students develop as writers and truly find their voice," Lewis says.

When not teaching, Lewis enjoys gardening, playing golf with her family, and going on road trips. ■

FLU shots potentially lifesaving

Yes, I'm talking about the flu shot again, I know. Every year around this time, I (along with many others in healthcare) start sounding like a broken record: "Have you gotten your flu shot yet?" But before you roll your eyes and mutter, "Here we go again," hear me out, because this isn't just a seasonal nag. It's a serious health reminder, especially for senior citizens.



As we age, our immune systems naturally weaken, making us more vulnerable to infections like influenza. The flu isn't just a few sniffles and a couple of days in bed; it can lead to severe complications such as pneumonia, hospitalization and even death. In fact, people aged 65 and older account for the majority of flu-related hospitalizations and deaths each year. That's why getting your flu shot isn't just a good idea, it's potentially a lifesaving one.

The flu virus changes every year, which is why the vaccine is updated annually to match the most common strains. Seniors are often recommended to get a high-dose flu vaccine, which is specifically designed to create a stronger immune response. These vaccines are more effective in older adults, helping to reduce the risk of serious illness.

Even if you're generally healthy and active, the flu can hit hard. If you have underlying conditions like diabetes, heart disease, or respiratory issues, the risks multiply. The flu can exacerbate these conditions, leading to complications that are far more dangerous than the flu itself.

Getting vaccinated doesn't just protect you; it helps protect your family, friends and community. Seniors often spend time with grandchildren, attend social gatherings, or live in communal settings, such as 55+ communities and assisted living buildings, where viruses can spread quickly. By getting your flu shot, you're helping to create a safer environment for everyone.

Now, let's clear up a few misconceptions: "The flu shot gives you the flu." Nope. The vaccine contains inactivated virus or pieces of the virus that can't cause illness. "It doesn't work anyway." While no vaccine is 100% effective, the flu shot significantly reduces your risk of severe illness and hospitalization.

Getting your flu shot is easier than ever. Pharmacies, clinics and even some grocery stores offer walk-in appointments. Let's make this flu season a safe one. Roll up your sleeve and get vaccinated. ■

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

99 COUNTIES, 99 rocks

Johnsons' journey on Iowa's Freedom Rock Tour

In August 2020, Jan Johnson and her husband, Paul, decided to take a two-day trip to Decorah.

"On the way, we happened to pass two Freedom Rocks and enjoyed seeing how they were displayed in their town," Johnson explains. "After arriving home, we looked online and found the details of the Freedom Rock Tour."

The tour was started in 2013 by artist Ray (Bubba) Sorensen and his wife, Maria. Bubba painted the first rock in 1999 off Interstate 80 at the Greenfield exit as a way to thank veterans.

The tour became Sorensen's goal of completing a rock in every Iowa county. The Polk County rock, the fifth he completed, was placed in Bondurant, where the Johnsons lived.

"While on a walk, I went past the Legion Hall one evening, and I saw Bubba painting on this rock," Johnson explains. "I visited with him and was very impressed with his story."

Ultimately, Sorensen was commissioned to paint a rock in each Iowa county, and it became the Johnsons' goal to visit them all.

When they started, most of the rocks were completed, but some were still in progress. The couple acquired an Iowa map, marked every town and city in each county, and decided to begin their journey of seeing them all.

Many of the Johnsons' trips were day trips. Especially in 2020, when there weren't many activities available, they were glad to have a project to enjoy. Since both were retired, they could travel whenever they wanted.

During their adventures, Paul and Jan took pictures of every side of each rock, and Jan began putting a photo album together. Each spring, summer and fall, they picked a different part of Iowa and planned out their routes. Sometimes they visited 15 to 20 rocks in a year; other times they only managed six or eight.

It took the Johnsons until this past year to complete all 99. They now live in Altoona, about four minutes from the Adventureland Hotel — home of the final rock Sorensen completed in Iowa.

"We could have toured that rock anytime, but we said we would definitely save the 100th rock until the very end," Johnson says. "Many



Jan and Paul Johnson have centered their Iowa travels around seeing each of the Freedom Rocks in the state.

times, in the cities we visited, we would also try and see some of the important and unique features of that town. We saw the Biggest Popcorn Ball, many museums in the towns and many other sites."

Johnson's favorite rock is in Adair County — the one off I-80 at the Greenfield exit.

"It is very moving to see how Bubba changes the rock each year," she shares.

One time, right before Memorial Day weekend, the Johnsons stopped by when Sorensen was just finishing that year's painting. He told them the story of how, one year, Vietnam veterans stopped by and asked if they could bring some ashes of their buddy who had lost his life while serving. They wanted to spread the ashes at the base of the rock. Bubba suggested mixing the ashes into the green paint he was using on the helicopter. He now never paints over that helicopter and has had many people bring or send him ashes to add to his green paint each year.

"I would say that seeing these Freedom

Rocks throughout Iowa has helped me know about and appreciate all of the military veterans that have come from our state," Johnson says. "Each rock in every county tells many, many stories of the men and women who have served our great country. And seeing these Freedom Rocks would give all people a great sense of patriotism and pride."

Sorensen is now painting Freedom Rocks in other states, with the goal of completing one in each state.

"We will visit any of the rocks that we find on our future travels," Johnson says.

Because Johnson enjoyed taking on this project and these road trips with her husband, she hopes to put together a PowerPoint presentation to share with different American Legions and other organizations.

Learn more about the Freedom Rocks and view a map at www.thefreedomrock.com or scan the QR code. ■



THE IMPORTANCE of seeking tutoring when grades begin to slip

As students navigate the often-challenging landscape of academics, it is not uncommon for grades to fluctuate. However, when you notice a significant decline in performance, it is crucial to address it early. Seeking tutoring as soon as a drop in grades is detected can make a world of difference in turning things around. Here's why prompt action is vital.



Preventing further struggles: Grades don't exist in a vacuum. A small dip in one area often leads to cascading challenges in others. For instance, struggling with a foundational concept in math could impact your understanding of more advanced material later on. By seeking tutoring early, you address gaps before they become insurmountable barriers. The longer you wait, the harder it becomes to catch up.

Personalized attention: In a classroom, teachers often have to divide their time among

many students, which can leave some struggling with concepts unnoticed. A tutor, on the other hand, can focus solely on your needs. This one-on-one attention allows them to identify the exact areas where you are struggling, providing personalized strategies and explanations to help you grasp difficult concepts.

Building confidence and reducing stress:

Falling behind in school can be demoralizing and stressful. Students often experience a lack of confidence in their abilities when grades drop, which can create a vicious cycle of self-doubt. Tutoring offers a safe, supportive space to address academic challenges, helping students regain their confidence. As understanding improves, stress levels decrease, which in turn leads to better academic performance.

Developing effective study skills:

Tutors don't just help students understand the material — they also teach valuable study habits and skills. Often, poor performance is linked to ineffective study techniques. A tutor can introduce time management strategies, note-taking methods, and problem-solving

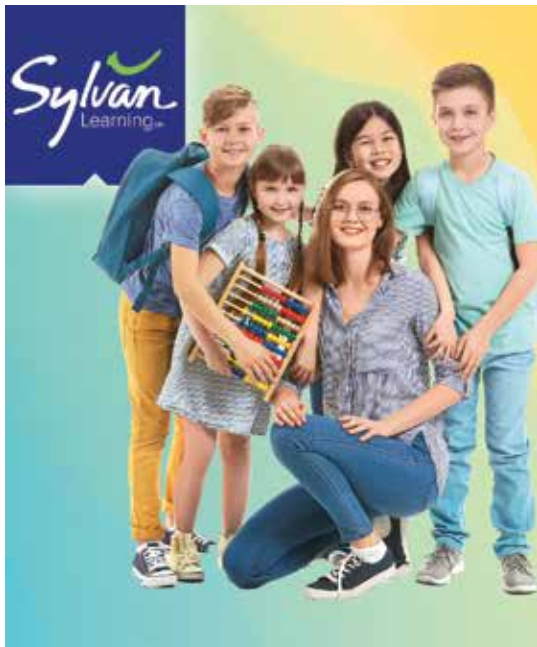
approaches that make learning more efficient. These skills not only help in the immediate term but also benefit students throughout their academic careers.

Positive academic habits for the future:

Addressing slipping grades early sets a proactive precedent for future academic challenges. It instills a mindset of seeking help when needed, rather than letting problems spiral. The experience of working through difficulties with a tutor teaches resilience and problem-solving, which are crucial life skills.

When grades begin to slip, the sooner you act, the better. Seeking tutoring not only helps prevent further academic decline but also provides valuable support, boosts confidence and equips students with skills for ongoing success. Don't wait until the problem is overwhelming — take control of your learning journey early on. ■

Information provided by Angela Jones, Owner and Center Director of Sylvan Learning of Altoona, 301 Center Place, Suite C-1, Altoona, 515-957-2923, Angela.Jones@sylvanlearning.com.



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PLAN AHEAD

By Sarah Masteller

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.

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WELLNESS

By Tricia Heberer

BOO-TOX: Smooth away fine lines

October is the perfect time to refresh your look, and "Boo-Tox" is more treat than trick. Botulinum toxin, (commonly known name brands such as Botox, Jeuveau, Xeomin) is one of the most popular aesthetic treatments for softening facial lines and restoring a youthful, refreshed appearance.



How it works: Botulinum toxin is a purified protein that temporarily relaxes the muscles responsible for dynamic wrinkles — the lines that form from repeated facial expressions like frowning, squinting or raising the eyebrows. By gently reducing this muscle activity, skin appears smoother and more rested.

Benefits:

- Smooths forehead lines, crow's feet and frown lines
- Helps prevent deeper wrinkles from forming over time
- Provides natural-looking results when performed by trained professionals

Safety matters: When administered by qualified providers, botulinum toxin is considered safe and well tolerated. Some clients may experience minor redness or bruising at the injection site, which resolves quickly.

This October, let "Boo-Tox" be your secret weapon for glowing confidence. A subtle refresh now means looking your best for the holidays ahead. Locate a trained medical professional to see if this treatment would be beneficial for you. ■

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

LASER tattoo removal: a fresh start for your skin

We all have stories behind our tattoo. Some of those we cherish, and some we would rather leave behind. Whether it is an old design that doesn't fit your style anymore or a spur-of-the-moment decision you'd like to reverse, pico laser technology makes saying goodbye to unwanted ink easier than ever.

How pico laser works: Pico lasers use ultra-fast bursts of energy measured in picoseconds (a trillionth of a second) to break down tattoo ink into tiny fragments. Your body then naturally clears away those particles over time. Because the pulses are so quick, there's less heat buildup, which means the treatment is generally more comfortable and carries a lower risk of complications compared to older laser methods.

How many sessions will you need? Most tattoos require six to 10 sessions, spaced about eight weeks apart. The exact number depends on the size, location, ink colors and depth of your tattoo. Black ink typically responds fastest, while brighter colors like blue and green may take a few extra treatments to fully fade.

Who is a good candidate? If you're in good health, have realistic expectations, and your skin isn't overly tanned, Pico laser could be a great option. It is safe for most skin tones and effective on a wide range of ink colors, whether you're looking for significant fading or complete removal.

With pico laser technology, a fresh canvas is within reach. ■

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



200 2nd St SE, Ste 1
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www.skinfusionfx.com

Merry, Bright & Bubbly

Holiday Open House

Celebrate the season with festive cocktails & mocktails, light appetizers, and exclusive event-only promotions on your favorite aesthetic and wellness services.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20 | 3-7 PM

Bring your friends, sip something sparkly, and get holiday-ready – glowing skin and all!

HEALTHY habits for a strong immune system

The weather is changing, and fall is finally here. With the change of season, we hear about cold and flu season. Staying healthy and keeping your immune system strong is not the result of avoiding germs but of building healthy habits like:

- Choosing whole foods and making water your default drink.
- Avoid keeping sugary snacks, sodas and candy in the house.
- Establishing healthy sleep patterns and reducing stress.
- Prioritizing chiropractic care. A healthy functioning nervous system is self-healing, self-regulating, and adapts to stressors in its environment.

The fall leaves don't bring the cold and flu, but they do bring a barrage of holidays with sugary sweets. When you are regularly practicing healthy habits, you can have a treat and return to healthy habits the next day. Incorporate these tips to mitigate the effects of sugar:

- Pair sugary foods with protein, fat or fiber to slow absorption and reduce blood sugar spikes.
- Encourage water instead of sugary drinks.
- Time treats after meals rather than on an empty stomach.
- Make sure to get regular physical activity and good sleep.
- Swap out candy for a non-food prizes like books, toys or art supplies.
- Get adjusted to help the nervous system regulate and boost immune system function. ■

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

FALL

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CITY and school board elections upcoming

City and school board elections are Tuesday, Nov. 4. Polls are open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

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>.



Altoona city candidates

City Council member at large three seats

Jeremy Boka
Scott Duer
Josh R. Dunwoody
Jayme McFadden

Southeast Polk Community School Board

Three At-large seats

Tracy Dawson
Brigid Ernst
Grant Gillon
Karla Jensen
Adam Krell

Public Measure SE

Shall the Board of Directors of the Southeast Polk Community School District in the Counties of Polk, Marion, and Jasper, State of Iowa, be authorized to contract indebtedness and issue General Obligation Bonds in an amount not to exceed \$51,000,000 to provide funds to build, furnish and equip a new elementary school; to remodel, repair, improve, furnish and equip its existing junior high school; and to make accessibility and safety improvements to existing playground equipment at all elementary facilities, with related site improvements? ■

HONOR OUR VETERANS

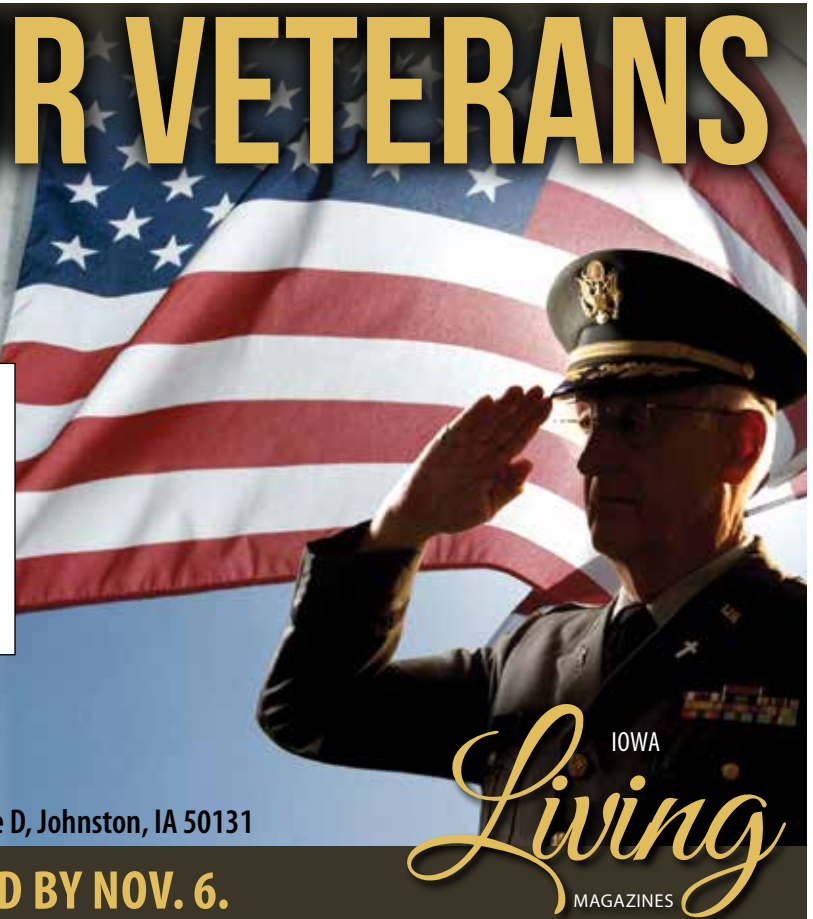
Iowa Living magazines will be saluting veterans in November issues. If you are a veteran who would like to be included, please send a photo (military or current) and the following information:

NAME:
CURRENT TOWN:
MILITARY BRANCH:
RANK:
ENLISTMENT DATES::
QUOTE: "What would you like others to know about serving your country?"

Family members submitting on behalf of veterans should include the veteran's answer to the above question.

Email to tammy@iowalivingmagazines.com or mail to:
Big Green Umbrella Media, 8101 Birchwood Court Suite D, Johnston, IA 50131

SUBMISSIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY NOV. 6.



Be sure to check for cancellations.

Prairie Meadows Casino Free Shows

1 Prairie Meadows Drive, Altoona

- The Unfortunate Sons: Saturday, Oct. 25, 8-11 p.m.
- Kenny Frette & the Country Classics: Tuesday, Oct. 28, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Back to Vinyl: Friday, Oct. 31, 8-11 p.m.



Monsters and Masterpieces Party

Thursday, Oct. 30, 5-7 p.m.
Edencrest at Tuscany, 1600 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona

Calling all little ghosts and goblins. You are invited to a spooktacular evening of trick-or-treating throughout the Edencrest community. Families are invited to wander the halls, collect sweet treats, and enjoy the festive fun. After filling your candy bags, stick around for pumpkin painting — a perfect way to add a personal touch to your Halloween décor. With costumes, candy and creativity, it's sure to be a frightfully fun time for residents, families and friends alike.

Chili and Oyster Bazaar

Saturday, Nov. 15, 4:30-6:30 p.m.
Centennial United Methodist Church, 9150 N.E. University Ave., Altoona

Centennial United Methodist Church is hosting its annual Chili and Oyster Bazaar. Free will donations. Profits are being split between a missions project for a school in Peru, La Casa de Esperanza, and Caring Hands in Altoona.



Edencrest at The Tuscany's Monthly Movement and Wellness Series

Nov. 20, Dec. 18, 1:30 p.m.

Edencrest at The Tuscany, 1690 Eighth St. S.E., Altoona, lower east entrance at bottom of the hill

Join this Monthly Movement & Wellness Series with Dr. Jonah Knous — Elevation Chiropractic where you'll explore ways to move better, feel better and live better — one month at a time. Each month brings a new topic, practical tips and a little inspiration to keep you moving all year long. RSVP at 515-850-6119.

ZaGaZig Shrine Ladies Auxilliary Fall Craft and Vendor Show

Saturday, Nov. 8, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
1100 Shriners Parkway, Altoona

More than 45 crafters and vendors, free admission and bake sale by the Ladies Auxiliary. Lunch will be available from the Ladies Auxiliary. Visit their Facebook Event Page: Showcasing our Crafters ZaGaZig Shrine Ladies Auxiliary Fall Craft & Vendor Show.



Cocoa, Carols and Cookies

Wednesday, Dec. 17, 2-4 p.m.

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

Celebrate the holiday season with Edencrest at their Cocoa, Carols & Cookies Party — a cozy evening full of sweet treats and festive fun. Enjoy a delicious hot cocoa bar with all your favorite toppings. Sing along during festive caroling for all ages. Get creative at a DIY cookie decorating station. Share in the laughter, joy and holiday cheer with friends, family and neighbors. It's the perfect way to warm your heart, lift your spirits and celebrate the most wonderful time of the year together.

CAP Theatre Presents "Beetlejuice JR."

Weekends from Oct. 24 through Nov. 9
CAP Theatre, 201 First Ave., Altoona

It's showtime. CAP Theatre in Altoona invites you to step into the strange and unusual world of "Beetlejuice JR." With songs, laughs and a whole lot of ghostly charm, "Beetlejuice JR" promises to be a frightfully fun night at the theatre. CAP Theatre serves ages 7-17 and strives to give all children, regardless of experience, the opportunity to be a part of, and experience, live theatre. Tickets range from \$12-\$18. For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.captheatre.org.

Sister's Christmas to Remember Craft and Vendor Event

Saturday, Nov. 8,
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
3200 Adventureland Drive, Altoona

More than 75 crafters and vendors, free admission.



Festival of Trees and Lights

Monday, Dec. 1, 1-3 p.m.

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

Enjoy this annual Festival of Trees and Lights. Bring your family and friends to stroll through the displays, snap photos by your favorite trees, and share in the festive cheer with the Edencrest residents and team. It's the perfect way to kick off the holiday season — cozy, community-centered, and brimming with holiday joy. Trees will be displayed throughout the month of December.

Coming up in the Altoona 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. ■

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FAITH

By Nathan Anenson

GOOD news at the center

For most of history, humanity assumed they were at the center of the universe and the sun and planets revolved around the earth. But, in 1543, a Polish astronomer named Nicolaus Copernicus discovered that the sun — not the earth — was at the center of our solar system. It shook people's understanding of reality. It was a revolution in how we see the world.



In a similar way, it is wise to examine what is at the center of our lives. Our default understanding is that we are at the center. Our schedules, careers, money, or even our struggles, can take that spot. Problems especially have a way of pulling everything into their orbit. When challenges come — at work, in relationships or with health — it can feel like they consume everything.

But what if something greater was at the center of our existence?

Christians talk about “good news.” This is simply that the life, death and resurrection of Jesus has shifted reality — and one day will make everything new. For the earliest followers of Jesus, this news wasn't just a comforting idea. It became the very center of their lives, stronger than fear, setbacks or even opposition. They had witnessed something they couldn't unsee: that love was stronger than hate, and life was stronger than death.

Their problems didn't disappear. In fact, many of them faced arrests, beatings and rejection. But instead of despair, they found surprising joy. Why? Because their troubles no longer sat at the center. The good news did.

There's a lesson in that, even if you're not sure what you believe. Shifting the focus away from our problems doesn't magically erase them, but it does put them into perspective. When the weight of worry isn't the axis we spin on, we find new courage and clarity.

We all arrange our lives around something. The question is: What's at the center of yours? Is it stress? Success? The next achievement? Or could it be something bigger, something that brings peace, hope and joy even when life doesn't go your way?

Just like Copernicus helped us see the universe differently, maybe it is time for your own revolution. Imagine the freedom of living with purpose instead of pressure, with peace instead of fear, with joy that doesn't depend on circumstances.

That's what happens when “good news” becomes more than background noise and instead becomes the center.

If you're curious about what that might look like, there are great churches in this community that would love to walk with you on the journey. Church is a community of people learning together how to live with good news at the center — and there's always room for you. ■

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

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CELEBRATING community, togetherness and shopping local

With the mild fall we've had so far, it feels wild to think that the holidays are just around the corner. Communities like Altoona are already preparing to kick off the season with warmth, gratitude and togetherness.

From festive gatherings to supporting local businesses, November offers the perfect opportunity to reconnect with loved ones and give back to the neighborhoods we call home.

Like many of you, I'm excited to bring back cherished traditions — from Thanksgiving feasts to Friendsgiving potlucks. This year, the focus is truly on being present and making meaningful memories. The holidays are about so much more than food. They're about making people feel seen, welcomed and remembered.

As the gift-buying season also ramps up, we're encouraging everyone to shop small and shop local during November's "Shop Local" campaigns.

Small Business Saturday — the weekend after Thanksgiving — is one of the chamber's biggest promotions for our members. It is a day to celebrate the local entrepreneurs and artisans who help keep our community vibrant. Every purchase from a small business makes a large impact. It helps those businesses keep their doors open and continue serving the people they love in a community they believe in. Be sure to watch social media for the chamber's "Shop Local" series, featuring the amazing shops we're lucky to have right here in town.

So whether you're:

- Picking out the perfect gift from a nearby shop
- Enjoying a festive weekend during Christmas in Olde Town
- Or simply sharing a warm meal with family...

This season is shaping up to be one of community, care and celebration.

Wishing you and yours a happy, healthy and heartwarming start to the holiday season.

Important dates:

- **Nov. 7** – Member Appreciation Breakfast at Prairie Meadows, 8-10 a.m.
- **Nov. 13** – Business 101: Help Us Help You 2026 think tank at noon at the Townsend Community Center
- **Nov. 13** – 12 Days Till Small Business Saturday social media promotion begins
- **Nov. 14** – Restored Psychiatry & Wellness ribbon cutting ceremony at noon, 612 Eighth St. S.W.
- **Nov. 29** – Small Business Saturday & Christmas in Olde Town ■

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





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[HTTPS://WWW.ALTOONACHAMBER.ORG/JOIN-TODAY](https://www.altoonachamber.org/join-today)





Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a Grand Reopening of Altoona Campus' track renovation project thanks to a generous grant from Prairie Meadows on Sept. 26. Photo by Cassandra Foss



Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Whip Delight on Oct. 7.



Hollie and Matt Imming at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Whip Delight.



Monica LaFrenz and Liv Dowling at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Whip Delight.



Brittany Glienke and Nikki Morgan at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Whip Delight.



Angie Bishop, Paul Satre and Linda Brown at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Master Gardeners new shed at the Enabling Garden.



Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting for Master Gardeners at the Enabling Garden for their new shed on Oct. 10. Meta and the Carpenter's Local 106 helped to make this happen.



Stephanie Harrington, Nancy Eichmann and Paul Gibbins at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Master Gardeners new shed at the Enabling Garden.



Tom Ballard, Jeremiah Fliss and Erin Minor at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Master Gardeners new shed at the Enabling Garden.



Sitting: Rosie Surber, Marlene Olson, Paul Satre; and, standing: Phil and Maggie Schwarck at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting for Master Gardeners new shed at the Enabling Garden.

OUT & ABOUT



Kristen Potter and Shanna Davison at Dr. Kari Swain's 30-years-in-business celebration.



Dr. Kari Swain and Susan Sheeks at Dr. Kari Swain's 30-years-in-business celebration on Sept. 17.



Deb and Bill Stearns at Dr. Kari Swain's 30-years-in-business celebration.



Miranda Blackford, Loral Barratt and Dr. Elizabeth Ellrich at Dr. Kari Swain's 30-years-in-business celebration.



Rod Marvin and Scott Swain at Dr. Kari Swain's 30-years-in-business celebration.



Jane Kunze, Chuck Ingle and Andrea Wilson at Dr. Kari Swain's 30-years-in-business celebration.



Sheila and Jeff Lancaster and Jessica Lee at Dr. Kari Swain's 30-years-in-business celebration.



Dr. Elizabeth Ellrich and Dr. Amy Jensen, DPT at Dr. Kari Swain's 30-years-in-business celebration.



Dr. Elizabeth Ellrich and Aaron Burns at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce Noon Networking at Pennie Carroll and Associates on Sept 16.



Rick Kroeger, Kyle Lee and Tammy Main at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce Noon Networking at Pennie Carroll and Associates.



Joe Carroll, Karri Stratton, Kendal Burzacott and Gina Boakye-Danquah at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce Noon Networking at Pennie Carroll and Associates.



Victoria and Grant Veatch at the Altoona Area Chamber of Commerce Noon Networking at Pennie Carroll and Associates.

CLASSIFIEDS

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AUCTIONS

WATERLOO LARGEST FLEAMARKET and garage sale held at the National Cattle Congress in Estel Hall. Saturday, October 25, 8am-5pm and Sunday, October 26, 9am to 3pm. Spaces still available. 515-298-3968. (mcn)

FOR SALE

NEW, (2 BR-2 BA), 14x66, Gas Range, 2-Door Refrigerator, Dishwasher, Walk-In Master Shower. Tub/Shower in 2nd Bath, \$99,900. Delivered, Set, On Your Prepared Lot in Iowa. Coachlight Homes. 1-319-239-1920. (mcn)

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today! (mcn)

Donate your car, truck, boat, RV and more to support our veterans! Schedule a FAST, FREE vehicle pickup and receive a top tax deduction! Call Veteran Car Donations at 1-888-429-2331 today! (mcn)

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FINANCIAL

Inflation is at 40 year highs. Interest rates are way up. Credit Cards. Medical Bills. Car Loans. Do you have \$10k or more in debt? Call **NATIONAL DEBT RELIEF** and find out how to pay off your debt for significantly less than what you owe! FREE quote: Call 1-866-552-0649. (mcn)

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